

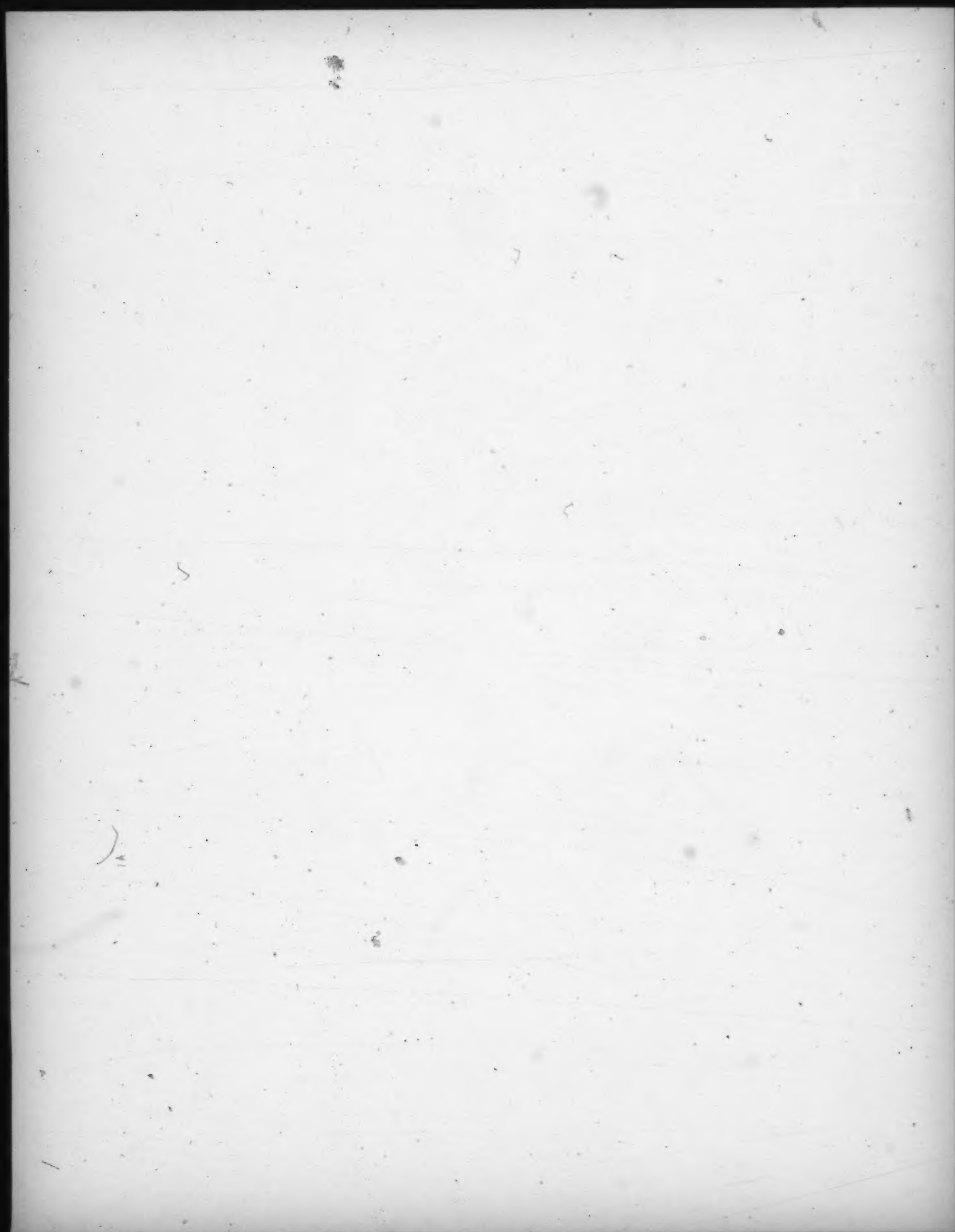
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**The Canadian Hockey Association Merger:  
An Analysis of Institutional Change**

by

**Julie A. Stevens**



**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial  
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy**

**Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation**

**Edmonton, Alberta  
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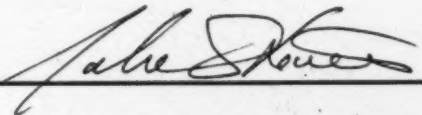
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## **The Canadian Hockey Association Merger: An Analysis of Institutional Change**

### **Abstract**

Previous research in the Canadian amateur sport system explored organizational change according to a macro perspective and therefore, failed to account for the micro-level forces that influence transformation. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the intra-organizational dynamics of change within a national level Canadian sport organization. This qualitative case analysis focuses upon a six-year time period during which the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) merged with Hockey Canada (HC) to form the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA). The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association was formed in 1914 and as the national governing body for hockey in Canada it was deeply embedded in the community traditions of the game where grassroots membership interests were focal. On the other hand, Hockey Canada was formed in 1969 by the federal government and was entrenched within both the state political apparatus and the corporate domain.

It is clear that the development of ice hockey in Canada was characterized by a history of antagonisms between community and commercial interests in the sport. These tensions were inherited by the CHA where contradictions between the CAHA's "sport provider" design and HC's "sport marketer" design emerged. The change process included an early stage of consummation where tremendous uncertainty grew within the association. This was followed by stages two and three where numerous oscillations between archetypes occurred. Finally, stage four revealed a new design where the structural remnants of the "sport provider" were layered upon the interpretive remnants of

the "sport marketer". Here, a new sport archetype, the Amateur Sport Enterprise, has emerged within the Canadian amateur sport institutional sector.

The internal dynamics of change highlighted the four major elements identified in Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) model of institutional change. The findings suggested that the precipitating dynamics of interests and value commitments played an important role in generating a new interpretive scheme, while the enabling dynamics of power and organizational capacity influenced oscillations and delays along the merger track. In addition, internal differentiation, or schisms, impacts the change process at numerous stages along the track.

## Acknowledgements

There is no doubt in my mind that a PhD is a journey that takes you along many paths. My doctorate involved several changes and adjustments. I was fortunate to work with supportive faculty who served as advisor and committee members. Each of these people encouraged me and provided confidence. Tim Burton is a tremendous mentor and advisor to me both in terms of completing the dissertation and in pursuing my academic career as a whole. Ann Hall taught me valuable lessons and continues to be an important source of advice and insight as I develop my career. Royston Greenwood supported my efforts to pursue both organizational analysis and sport studies and encouraged me to work across both fields. Debra Shogan offered a strong sounding board of reason and provided a powerful model of what it takes to be a respected academic. I greatly appreciate Tom Hinch's involvement on my committee and his interest in the project. As the external examiner, Terry Haggerty offered insightful comments regarding the project and encouraged me to continue my research in this area. Finally, I would like to thank Trevor Slack for being an early champion for my PhD and his support during the early part of my program.

I also wish to thank various volunteers and administrators within the Canadian Hockey Association who offered intellectual and financial support to my project. In particular, I thank Mr. Frank Lento, Chairman of the Board of Directors at the time my proposal was approved by the CHA. He championed the proposal and acted as an avid supporter within the CHA. He was accompanied by a number of insightful volunteers who felt that a project such as mine was an important endeavour for the CHA as a whole. Various officers who served on the executive committee at the time were Mr. Don Brown, Mr. Wayne Russell, Mr. Sheldon Lanchberry, Mr. Michel Legace, Mr. Don Boutorac, Mr. Alan Matthews, and Mr. Bob MacKinnon.

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Ferchuk, for its support during the early stages of this project. I hope the CHA will utilize this study to continue its efforts towards improvement and self-reflection.

Completing this dissertation involved a long process of perseverance. I experienced a tremendous network of friendship during my time at the University of Alberta. In particular, an amazing social and professional network, called the "Remedians" emerged during my time at U of A - Debra, Gloria, Karen, Ange, Michelle, Joannie, Marnie, Christine, Tosha, Lori, Cathy, and Judy. Thank you Remedians for you help and laughter! Remember - membership is for life!

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In 1914, the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) became the sport governing body for amateur hockey throughout Canada. Due to its origin during the amateur era of Canadian sport, the CAHA's mandate focused upon the provision of hockey opportunities for Canadians. The organization developed a complex, volunteer-driven structure that initially emphasized domestic development and later expanded to include an international high-performance orientation.

Hockey Canada (HC) was created in 1969 by the Canadian federal government. The impetus for its formation was the *1969 Task Force Report on Sport for Canadians* (Government of Canada, 1969), a political brainchild of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau emerging from his campaign platform to strengthen the Canadian sport system. Comprised of representatives from the professional hockey, corporate and public sectors, Hockey Canada's mandate was to manage the men's national team, the only national program at the time. Therefore, HC was a small professional agency that marketed one hockey property. In 1994, these two hockey organizations merged to form the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA). The event changed the face of amateur hockey in Canada by combining two organizations, with distinct traditions and an antagonistic history, into one new hockey entity.

### *Research Purpose and Questions*

This research plan involves two key elements. First, a critical analysis of the development of the Canadian hockey institutional forum is presented. This review highlights the emergence of separate and contradictory actors within the domain and how they interacted over time. The relation among institutional actors illustrates an initial path of divergence followed by convergence that ultimately led to the emergence of one dominant actor within the domain. Second, an organizational-individual level of analysis presents a detailed account of the interaction of structure and action within the Canadian Hockey Association. Here, the merger between the CAHA and HC is examined according to the sequence, pace and intra-organizational dynamics of the change process. This part of the analysis offers a detailed micro level examination of institutional change.

Tsoukas (1989) supported the pursuit of ideographic organizational study because it can be used to investigate the configurational pattern constituted by the parts of a phenomenon and the way in which these parts fit within a wider context. This research project seeks first, to map out the pertinent components of the organizational change model developed by Greenwood and Hinings (1996)<sup>1</sup>, second, to produce explanations of the extent to which the model applies to this case, and finally, to consider the need for modifications to the model which allow a better understanding of the process of the CHA merger. Thus, the research seeks to examine the explanatory strength of the Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) model within the amateur sport sector and whether the model, in its

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<sup>1</sup> Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) model of organizational change is outlined in chapter four (pp. 115-123) and chapter five (pp. 157-160).

current state or suitably adapted, allows for a better understanding of the process of the CHA merger as well as future mergers in the amateur sport field.

Overall, the study explores the nature of large-scale change by examining both institutional evolution and organizational transformation. The key research questions include:

*What was the context and history surrounding this change process?*

*What was the nature of the change track?*

*How did pace and sequence influence the dynamics of the change track?*

*How did the key intra-organizational dynamics impact the change process?*

*How did the key intra-organizational dynamics interrelate to each other?*

#### *Research Approach*

The study addresses the issue of how institutional arrangements shape and mediate change by integrating elements of "old" and "new" institutional frames within a case study design. As DiMaggio and Powell (1991) stated, "findings of case-based research provoke efforts to replace rational theories of technical contingency or strategic choice with alternative models that are more consistent with the organizational reality that researchers have observed" (p. 3). Chapter two outlines the interpretive case-study approach adopted for the research. The method involves an iterative approach to exploration that included both etic and emic strategies of inquiry. First, interview questions utilized during the early stages of data collection were generated from etic sources, or issues that were identified from theoretical literature and previous research.

Second, interview questions utilized during the later stages of data collection were generated from emic sources, or the key themes and concepts that emerged from the data. A case analysis offers pluralistic strategies since it is both descriptive and explanatory, and therefore, is well suited to a detailed and novel situation (Yin, 1994).

In addition, a case study design facilitates theory development. Vaughan (1992) stated that theory elaboration is "a method for developing general theories of a particular phenomenon through qualitative case analysis" (p. 175). She specifies the notions of theory as models or concepts, and elaboration as a "process of refining a theory in order to specify the circumstances in which it does or does not offer potential for explanation" (Vaughan, 1992: 175). Overall, this research develops theory in an integrated, not fragmented manner. It complements previous work on the intra-organizational dynamics of change. For example, a key consideration is whether organization theory concepts change when grounded in research that delves into non-profit and amateur sport organizations. In other words, there is a need to explore various concepts in different organizational forms, such as organization change in amateur sport, organizational tracks in mergers, and schisms in intra-organizational dynamics.

Chapter two also includes a detailed explanation of the data management and analysis techniques utilized in the study. Data collection involved in-depth interviews, documentation, and direct observation. Intensity, critical case, and funnel sampling were employed in order to include participants who were involved in the CHA merger firsthand, and in consequence, were considered authorities on the experience. The data analysis is detailed according to the specific coding, thematization, and conceptualization strategies adopted during the interpretation of information.



### *Theoretical Orientation*

The nature of change within Canadian amateur sport has been explored according to a variety of theoretical perspectives and levels of analysis. One stream of research interprets the development of Canadian sport at a systemic level and within a sociological framework (Kidd, 1996; 1995, 1982; Macintosh and Whitson; 1990; Beamish, 1990; Macintosh, Bedecki and Franks, 1987; Gruneau, 1988, 1978, 1976). A second stream emphasizes an organizational level of analysis within the system and a management perspective (Stevens, 2000; Hinings, Thibault, Slack and Kikulis, 1996; Kikulis, Slack and Hinings, 1995a, 1995b, 1992; Slack and Hinings, 1994; Thibault, Slack and Hinings, 1993). The most fruitful accounts within this literature include studies that integrate both streams of inquiry. Thus, a stronger analysis is possible when both social context and organizational dynamics are considered together to present one holistic explanation of institutional change.

In order to address the question of how organizational change occurs, this study follows the lead of various organizational change scholars who incorporate structure and action based views (Pettigrew, 1985a; Perrow, 1986) and multiple levels of analysis (Fox-Wolfgramm, Boal and Hunt, 1998; Pettigrew, 1995; Gersick, 1991). Therefore, the study utilizes an integrated perspective of organizational change that combines institutional theory<sup>2</sup>, a deterministic approach to understanding change, with strategic choice theory, a voluntaristic perspective. More specifically, the theoretical framework for the study contrasts the action-based view of strategic-choice theory with the structure-

based view of institutional theory.

Early institutional theory literature explored issues of power and competing values that shape an organization (Clark, 1972; Selznick, 1957). In contrast, the work on institutional theory that followed these early efforts emphasized the homogeneity of organization forms (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Tolbert and Zucker, 1983). Although each of these perspectives has contributed to the expansion of institutional theory as a whole, recent efforts have integrated these two streams in order to offer a more insightful explanation of the nature of organizational life (Reed, 1997; Barley and Tolbert, 1997; Scott, 1995a; Powell and DiMaggio, 1991). DiMaggio and Powell (1991) argued that while current literature on institutional theory acknowledges the ways in which social action is channelled by shared systems of beliefs and rules, it rejects functional accounts of institutional development that over-emphasize structured and efficient explanations. Instead, the perspective recognizes the imperfections of social action and considers the "ways in which institutions complicate and constitute the paths by which solutions are sought" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991: 11).

Organizations have biographies that affect how they respond to change (Greenwood and Hinings, 1993). Therefore, it is important to understand the historical development of the organizations involved in this case. Chapter three explains how actors, namely the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association, the hockey booster/entrepreneur coalition, Hockey Canada and the National Hockey League, have shaped and been shaped by the Canadian hockey institutional arena. The purpose of the chapter is to outline a framework upon which to situate the CHA merger case study. The

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<sup>2</sup> This term and others are defined in Appendix A – Glossary of Terms on pp. 208-209.

socio-historical account describes how the organization and institutionalization of Canadian hockey came about prior to the merger.

The Canadian hockey system is a forum comprised of enduring antagonisms between commercial and community forces, and these interests were manifest in tensions among these three major institutional actors. Over the years, various economic, political and social forces created eras of institutional divergence and convergence within this domain. A series of temporal eras is described in order to illustrate periods of contradiction among institutional actors and highlight when ideological dissension challenged existing social structures within the Canadian hockey forum. The contradictory moments enabled certain actors to access emerging power centres within the domain. The result was the reconstitution of institutional structures, practices and beliefs that favoured particular groups and organizations within the domain.

Once a new context was established, actors began to interpret and re-interpret the social structure to a point where a level of resistance, once again, generated a re-configuration of power centres within the arena. Throughout this series of constructions, challenges and re-constructions, the scale and variance of institutional actors within the Canadian hockey system changed from a small yet diverse group into a large and concentrated collection of managerial elites. In addition, the institutional hockey forum experienced early divergence, then shifted toward convergence, and now there exists a powerful condition of institutional perseverance that has minimized opportunities for institutional change.

Processes within the organization that shape convergence and punctuations are relatively poorly understood (Romanelli and Tushman, 1994). Therefore, in chapters

four and five, the analysis of institutional change is shifted from the systemic to the organizational level in order to explore specific elements of organizational change. The differentiation of the macro-micro levels of analysis is intended to enhance the search for analytical connection. Alexander and Giesen (1987) looked upon the linkage between systemic and organizational levels of analysis as an iterative review where a macro-analysis explores "ideational complexes and institutional systems" and a micro-analysis examines how "actors within such situations make interpretations and purposefully act" (p 16). Thus, the discussion of "actors in an institutional field" that is offered in chapter three leads directly to the examination of "actors in an organization" that is presented in chapter four and five.

Greenwood and Hinings (1996) also supported a theoretical convergence of deterministic and voluntaristic perspectives, and believed that the integration of these views is an effective framework in which to explain organizational change. They proposed an institutional model of change that highlights the interconnection of external contextual factors and internal organizational dynamics. The model is founded on the notion that institutional fields experience a convergence around institutionally prescribed templates, or archetypes (Miller and Friesen, 1980a, 1980b, 1984; Hinings and Greenwood, 1988). Archetypes are tightly coupled value-structure designs that include not only structural elements but powerful underlying interpretive schemes (Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood, 1980) that imbued particular values and meanings into an organizational design. The model of change proposed by Greenwood and Hinings (1996) is an attempt to explain how radical change, or the transformation of an organization from one archetype to another, can occur within an institutional context.

Chapter four begins with an explanation of the nature of archetypes, based upon the foundational work by Miller, (1987), Miller and Friesen (1980a, 1980b, 1984), Hinings and Greenwood (1988), and Greenwood and Hinings (1988). Once the characteristics and properties of the configurational approach are detailed, an extensive overview of the organizational design of two entities, the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) and Hockey Canada (HC) is provided. This outline offers specific comparisons and contrasts of key archetype elements, including interpretive, systemic and structural characteristics. Finally, the CHA merger track is identified and explained. The analysis expands current understandings of particular track characteristics, including the sequence of de-coupling, the pace of change, and various design variations such as embryonic archetype (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988) and sedimentation (Cooper, Hinings, Greenwood and Brown, 1996).

Chapter five highlights the intra-organizational dynamics that played a role during the merger. These dynamics are outlined in the institutional model and include precipitating dynamics, specifically interests and value commitments, and enabling dynamics, specifically power dependencies and organizational capacity. These factors are contrasted and compared to determine how and when they influence radical change. Finally, a new intra-organizational dynamic, organizational differentiation or schism, is introduced. The notion of schisms conceptualizes values, interests, power and capability as the properties of groups within the organization.

More recent research on institutional change examines the strategic and political factors that affect organizational decision-making and how this is compounded by the multiplicity of institutional actors within an organization (Jepperson and Meyer, 1991;



Oliver, 1992, 1991; Judge and Zeithmal, 1992). The role of actors within an organization was raised by Child (1997, 1972) in response to overly deterministic explanations of organizations. However, internal differentiation is not considered within Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) deinstitutionalization model. Therefore, this study explores the addition of schisms, or groups of actors, into the model and offers insight into the nature of their influence on organizational change.



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### Case Study Design

Within sport management, the case method has not been a key research approach although it has been used for various research projects, such as the in-depth exploration of theoretical concepts in organizational design (Stevens and Slack, 1998; Hill and Kikulis, 1999), sport industry domains (Cousens and Slack, 1996), and sporting events (Sack and Johnson, 1996). It should be recognized that this case study focused upon a change process; however, two particular aspects of the CHA merger were emphasized in the analysis. First, the sequence and characteristics of the change were examined according to Hinings and Greenwood's (1988) notion of organizational tracks. Second, once the track was identified, then the intra-organizational dynamics, or internal factors influencing the change process were explored. These two foci suit, but are not limited to, the two key characteristics Yin (1994) identified in the case method. A case study is an empirical inquiry that not only "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when" (p. 13) but also recognizes the "boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13). This case study enabled the researcher to provide descriptive detail of the CHA merger based upon events and experiences that occurred during the merger. For example, the results provided a thorough account of the merger organizational track and an explanation of the characteristics and inter-relations of the intra-organizational dynamics of change.

The case analysis provides different perspectives on a particular social problem, specifically the CHA merger (Cresswell, 1998; Bryman, 1992, 1988). Orum, Feagin and

Sjorberg (1991) argue that the case study encourages theoretical innovation and generalization. Stake (1998) believes that case analysis is an effective method to explore exemplars particularly when the social phenomenon is compelling and unique. In addition, Vaughan's (1992) notion of theory suggests that cases play an important role in capturing new organizational forms that are analyzed regarding an event, activity or circumstance explored within the domain of a particular theory. In other words, if the case utilized in a study is different from those utilized in previous research, then it extends a theory perspective. The case used in this study generated new and original sets of questions regarding change within Canadian NSOs. The researcher employed both descriptive and explanatory strategies (Yin, 1994) to generate a detailed account of an uncommon situation. Mergers within the Canadian nonprofit amateur sport domain are irregular since NSOs are the sole national governing body for a sport. Thus, multiple national organizations within one sport do not normally exist, and therefore, the Canadian hockey system, with its numerous national-level agencies, offered a unique circumstance.

Second, the case study approach facilitates learning and exploration, particularly during the early stages of a research program (Orum et al., 1991; Yin, 1994; Eisenhardt, 1989; Dyer and Wilkins, 1991; Stake, 1995). In fact, utilizing the case approach to explore the nature and dynamics of organizational change revealed new interpretations of the Greenwood and Hinings (1996) model of institutional change. In addition, it provided a solid empirical basis to further explore the notions of schisms as an intra-dynamic of change, and a new amateur sport archetype called the Amateur Sport Enterprise (each of these are discussed in greater detail in chapters four and five). Thus,

the CHA merger case presented a forum to begin a new stream of inquiry within the Canadian amateur sport organizational change literature.

Finally, Vaughan (1992) suggests that a case study offers three advantages for theory elaboration; it shifts the unit of analysis, changes the level of analysis, and explores large, complex systems that are typically difficult to study. Collectively, these benefits enable a researcher to generate a multi-tiered exploration. The CHA merger was a powerful case to examine organizational change because it allowed comparison between multiple levels of analysis, such as societal, organizational and sub-unit levels. Eisenhardt (1989) and Klein, Dansereau and Hall (1994) stated that multiple levels of analysis enable an embedded research approach where multiple factors can be analyzed and compared at one time. By analyzing a complex social network (Orum et al., 1991) such as the CHA, this case permitted a holistic exploration of organizational change that incorporated social-organizational-individual levels of analysis, internal and external forces, and voluntaristic and deterministic perspectives.

The research questions in the present study sought to understand the nature of archetypes, tracks and the intra-organizational dynamics of change, and more specifically, to interpret these concepts according to the CHA merger. Therefore, the case needed to incorporate a lengthy time-period in order to consider not only what happened during the merger, but also what occurred during the time leading up to the amalgamation of the CAHA and Hockey Canada. Therefore, information was gathered regarding the Canadian hockey institutional system as early as 1914 when the CAHA, which was the oldest parent organization involved in the CHA merger, was formed. This secondary data offered information on the historical aspects of each parent organization

as well as their relationship to each other. Primary data regarding the actual merger was collected from May 1994, when the decision to merge was made by both the CAHA and Hockey Canada, until May 2000, when the research for the dissertation was completed.

Gaining access to CHA members and documents involved a long 18-month process. A research proposal for the merger study was submitted to the CHA Research Committee in September 1995. The Chair of the Research Committee returned the application with suggestions regarding changes to the time-frame and focus of the project. These changes were required in order to gain initial endorsement of the project. However, the committee did not have the authority to approve the project. Therefore, in January 1996 a revised proposal was presented directly to the volunteer Executive Committee, comprised of the CHA Chairman, Past-Chairman, Officers, and President. During a 12-month review by the executive committee of the organization, the proposal was negotiated and further revised. The key elements that the Executive Committee wanted clarified were the use of the data, confidentiality, and the degree of involvement by organizational members. The Executive Committee also requested that a final report be submitted to the CHA at the completion of the study. The final support of the project, and permission to access CHA members, was awarded in February 1997.

When the project received approval from the Executive Committee, a staff member was assigned to liaise with the researcher and assist in gaining information for the project. The first step in data collection was to obtain a CHA membership list and forward correspondence to all potential interviewees. An introductory fax was sent to each volunteer participant explaining the project and requesting her/his involvement. Follow-up phone calls were made to confirm availability and to schedule interviews with



volunteers during the 1997 CHA Annual General Meeting, or at an alternative time. The CHA Manager assigned a staff contact at the CHA head offices in Ottawa and Calgary, who distributed introductory letters and scheduled interviews with staff at each location on behalf of the researcher.

Participants were chosen according to intensity and criterion sampling techniques (Morse, 1994). Criterion sampling is defined as "all cases that meet some criterion; useful for quality assurance" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 28). Intensity sampling is defined as "information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon intensely, but not extremely" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 28). In this study, participants had to be members of the CHA who functioned at the key decision-making ranks of the organization. This included staff members at the managerial level of the formal organizational structure, all members of the CHA Board of Directors, and any members of the former CAHA and Hockey Canada Boards who did not remain with the CHA after the merger. Board members were chosen because they approved the merger agreement for their respective organizations. CHA managers were selected because every manager from each parent organization remained with the new CHA and dealt firsthand with the administrative challenges of the merger.

### **Data Collection**

Triangulation is an effective research technique that combines multiple sources of data collection methods in one research project (Patton, 1987a). Three different data



collection methods were utilized during the CHA merger qualitative case study. The primary data collection method was in-depth interviews. The interview method was an interactive approach and allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of the merger directly from the participants. The study also included an analysis of documents, which provided historical details on the CAHA, Hockey Canada, and the Canadian hockey system as a whole. Finally, direct observations were utilized throughout the study in order to supplement the interview and document information.

#### *In-Depth Interview*

A general interview guide approach involves "a list of questions or issues that are to be explored in the course of an interview" (Patton, 1990: 111). The semi-structured interview guide utilized in this study outlined a set of issues that served as a checklist for questions (see Appendix B – Interview Guide). These issues included topics such as the nature of each parent organization, the reasons for the merger, the nature of the merger planning process, and various dynamics that occurred after the formal merger took place. In this way, the interview followed a predetermined plan while at the same time allowing for extra discussion on particular themes that emerged during the interview. Thus, when an interesting comment or idea arose during an interview, the researcher probed further in order to clarify the thoughts and ideas of the interviewee. Although the interview guide approach posed the risk of ignoring salient topics or limiting comparability (Patton, 1987b), the semi-structured format balanced these characteristics. Overall, each

interview was treated as a conversational exchange between the participant and the researcher.

However, the direct relation that develops between a participant and researcher during an interview may create difficulties associated with bias. While interviewing participants about the CHA merger, the researcher became "too close to the data". In other words, she placed emotional bias upon the data collection that went beyond the theoretical and subjective impressions that are normally accepted as part of a researcher's role in a qualitative case design. Indeed, getting passionate and involved in data interpretation is an important and expected element of qualitative research (Henderson, 1991). In this case, the high degree of subjectivity was a concern during data collection, not data analysis. For example, the researcher's emotions may have directed participants to create certain understandings during interviews, which may not have represented their precise views. There were two specific elements of this experience that need to be addressed. First, although the qualitative work involved data collection methods that had a high "closeness" loading, or emotional connection to the researcher, it was still important to achieve a balance between closeness and distance throughout the study (Richards, 1998).

Second, a challenge arose when participants, rather than the researcher, attempted to gain insight into the data through their interaction with the researcher. For example, there were moments during interviews where the role of researcher and participant were reversed and it seemed as though the participant was interviewing the researcher. The merger was a political issue within the CHA and some participants wanted to know what other people were saying. This information was not disclosed because of the

commitment to confidentiality. However, there were times during the study when it appeared that the participants were biasing their comments based upon their impressions of what other participants stated. Thus, responses were being given based on what a participant thought other respondents had said. In addition, some respondents expected certain questions to be asked during the interview and expressed disappointment when this did not occur. The intent in describing these experiences is not to say that the data were problematic, but rather to illustrate particular circumstances in a qualitative case study research design, such as strong personal subjectivity and emotional responses, which inevitably complicated the data collection process.

Each interview began with experience and background-based questions (Patton, 1987a, 1982, 1980) in order to establish a rapport and comfort level between the participant and the researcher. Then, knowledge-based questions were asked in order to collect factual information about the CHA merger. At times, prefatory statements (Patton, 1987a) were employed to lead the participant through the interview and signal transitions from one question area into the next. It was very effective to make statements such as, "The interview will begin with questions concerning your background and involvement with the CAHA/HC" or "The final section of this interview will focus upon the outcomes of the merger". As well, clear and singular questions were articulated, such as "Could you describe the merger process?" Probes and follow-ups were integrated into the process in order to deepen and enrich the responses; for example, if a participant commented that the merger was a poorly planned process, the interviewer attempted to expand upon the interviewee's idea by asking, "Can you provide an example to illustrate the poor planning?"

Patton (1990) suggests that the interview method involved purposive, not random sampling. A funnel sampling sequence was employed which enabled the study to explore the CHA merger from the general issues, which focuses upon the understandings of members of the Board of Directors and other lower-level staff, towards specific merger dynamics, which targets the interpretations of the Executive Committee and high-level staff. Specifically, the inquiry was conducted along two general progressions: from volunteers to staff, and from middle to high decision-making levels, although there were a few instances where this progression was not followed in order to schedule an interview at a convenient time and location for a participant. Typically, professionals within amateur national sport organizations (NSOs) are more involved in the day-to-day operations of the organization, whereas volunteers are somewhat removed and serve a greater function within the more general, governance realm of the association (Macintosh, et al., 1987). This distinction is a source of great friction within NSOs, since volunteers feel they are not informed about key issues, while at the same time, professionals seek greater decision-making power (Macintosh and Whitson, 1990). Therefore, in order to ensure complete input, the study began with interviews with Board members, who included volunteers at the middle decision-making levels of the CHA.

Later, interviews were held with members who functioned within the core domain of the organization. In particular, members at the upper decision-making levels of the organization, primarily staff but also executive volunteers, were interviewed during the final stage of data collection. This allowed the researcher to focus upon specific details of the merger process, such as key reasons for the merger and particular factors that influenced the negotiations, after a more general understanding of the change was

achieved. Data management was an iterative process between collection and analysis; therefore, questions and concepts were constantly explored and re-created throughout the study. By the time the final interviews were completed, the questions emphasized critical elements of the merger that were created from data gathered during the early stages of the study.

One last challenge that related to the in-depth interviews was the issue of trust. How does the researcher know that the comments people share during an interview are not deceitful? The strongest reason for participants to distrust the researcher is a desire for self-protection, mainly through direct or indirect reflections of the organization as a whole. In other words, deliberate deception by interviewees may be done in order to protect their communities and culture. This can have two potential impacts upon the interview data. On the one hand, an interviewee may deliberately deceive in order to protect personal and/or organizational interests. For example, a participant may refuse to disclose the manner by which key merger decisions were made in order to prevent any disputes over process. On the other hand, interviewees may feel that the interview is an opportunity to serve their interests, and will therefore cooperate rather than resist when it comes to disclosing information. Although it is uncertain whether or not a particular interviewee was protective or forthcoming, the information gathered during each interview in this study was accepted as the opinion of each participant and analyzed accordingly. Overall, the researcher met the standards of confidentiality and anonymity and in this way, encouraged participants to trust these ethical standards and be forthright.

Overall, 66 interviews were conducted during the study. These included 32 volunteer and 34 staff involved at both the national and provincial structures of the CHA.



Participants from the volunteer group represented 15 volunteers from the highest levels of the CHA's provincial hockey branches, six Council Directors sitting on the Board of Directors, three life members who attend CHA Annual General Meetings, six executive national-level volunteer Officers, and two former members of the Hockey Canada (HC) Board of Directors. On the staff side, members from the CHA head offices in Calgary and Ottawa, and provincial level branch head offices were interviewed. These included 13 staff from the former Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA), eight staff from the former Hockey Canada (HC), and six new CHA managers, one of whom worked at a regional office. Seven provincial managers were part of the group of staff participants.

Although 66 interviews were completed, only 38 transcripts were included in the data analysis. There were two reasons for this reduction. First, as the data collection unfolded it became apparent that there was an over-abundance of data for the scope of a PhD dissertation. In fact, excessive data is a critical challenge in qualitative research (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The data set presented a difficult logistical load for this dissertation. The data not included here will form the subject of a later study. Second, the data also revealed how two distinct groups of participants held different perceptions of the merger. The high-level executive volunteers (a total of 11 participants) and the national office staff (a total of 27) appeared to be more informed about the process and dynamics of the merger. On the other hand, middle-level volunteers and provincial staff seemed to be more informed about the provincial-level implications of the merger. For these reasons, data from 38 participant transcriptions were included in the analysis. Field notes from the remaining 28 interviews were considered but only as a means of offering



thematic and conceptual insights. The actual content of these interviews was not included in the study.

Interviews were conducted over a 12-month time frame, with the majority held in the first four months of this period. One set of interviews was conducted in May 1997 at the CHA annual general meeting in Victoria, British Columbia. A second set was conducted at the Ottawa head office in July 1997, followed quickly by interviews at the Calgary office in August and September. Due to restrictions on the availability of some participants, additional independent interviews were held at different times through the remainder of 1997 and culminated in April 1998. Direct observations were made throughout the study and, for the most part, reflected similar time periods as the interview periods. On-site visits contributed to the majority of the field notes, but observations were also made at events, meetings and activities the researcher attended during 1997, 1998 and 1999. For example, the researcher attended the 1997 CHA Annual General Meeting, the 1998 Women's National team try-out camp, and the 1998 and 1999 Senior Women's National Championships which involved CHA Executive Committee meetings. The final direct observations were made at the Open Ice Hockey Summit in August 1999 and the review of the CHA 2000 AGM minutes, held in May, marked the closure of data collection for the study.

### *Documentation*

The purpose of accessing documents in a qualitative study is to corroborate

existing data and make inferences about outlying themes and categories which were not identified from other sources of information (Yin, 1994). This study utilized a variety of documents including formal evaluations of the organization, commissioned organizational audits, administrative materials and communiqués, minutes of meetings (such as Board of Directors, Council and Executive Committee sessions), annual written reports, published program materials, and finally, press releases and newspaper clippings. The document analysis provided exact records regarding the type and timing of organizational activities. For example, CAHA Officer meeting minutes provided the specific date of the decision to merge with Hockey Canada as well as some of the formal conditions attached to the agreement. In addition, inferences were drawn from formal documents regarding values, orientations and contexts that impacted the CHA merger process. For example, Annual General Meeting minutes included member comments typed verbatim, which captured past commentary and offered insightful data to the study.

Documents were collected at various places and times. CAHA documents were collected during the trip to the CHA Ottawa office in July 1997. These included the minutes of AGMs from various years between 1935 and 1997. Additional minutes for 1998 and 1999 were retrieved at a later date. Hockey Canada documents were obtained during a visit to the CHA Calgary office in August 1997. Some HC documents were not available because of the criminal charges against former HC members being investigated at the time. However, a former HC staff member working in the CHA offered some documents from the 1970s and 1980s for review. Specific CHA documents, including minutes for meetings where the merger issue was discussed, CHA annual reports, and program material, were collected at all sites and at different times throughout the study.

Documents were also obtained from the National Library and Archives in Ottawa in July 1997. This involved reviewing files on both the CAHA and HC and collecting documents about each of these parent organizations. Most of these materials were donated to the archives by Mr. Gordon Juckes, a former CAHA Executive Director, and included personal correspondences between himself and members of Hockey Canada.

### *Direct Observation*

Field notes represent another data collection method. In order to complement the interview data, various thoughts and ideas experienced by the researcher during the project were recorded. These notes not only included interview memos, but also observations from other CHA activities. For example, while completing interviews at the 1997 Annual General Meeting (AGM), the researcher attended various sessions that were part of the AGM program. The forums were a valuable source of information because they offered data from CHA members who spoke during the plenary sessions but were not interviewed. In addition, interviews conducted at both of the CHA head offices enabled the researcher to make direct observations while on-site. Finally, the researcher played multiple roles with the CHA that extended the scope of data collection for the merger study. These roles included participation in various CHA events and program activities, such as the women's national team training camp. Overall, the direct observation data collection method served to supplement the more formal methods of interviewing and document analysis, and provided valuable information regarding the

CHA's organizational culture.

### **Data Analysis**

During the data analysis stage of case research, it is important to establish the criteria for interpreting findings (Yin, 1994). Rein and Schon (1977) view the data analysis stage as a simple progression from description to explanation. It is important to first tell the "story" about a situation and then to construct a "map" to build a theory or model. In this way, the analysis evolves into a step-by-step process towards abstraction, where data are arranged systematically according to levels of conceptualization (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). Carney (1990) built a similar data display format according to a data summarizing and packaging level, a repackaging and aggregating level, and finally developing and constructing an explanatory framework.

Part of the importance of a storytelling approach is not only to offer a complete account of the case, but to also integrate an explanation of the social process into the theoretical interpretation. Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest that process "gives life" to data by connecting snapshots of action and interaction. They continue:

To capture process analytically, one must show the evolving nature of events by noting why and how action/interaction – in the form of events, doings, or happenings – will change, stay the same, or regress; why there is progression of events or what enables continuity of a line of action/interaction, in the face of changing conditions, and with what consequences (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 144).

Qualitative studies have a peculiar life cycle that disperses data collection and analysis throughout the research (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The data analysis process employed in this study actually began prior to data collection. Interview questions were identified from theoretical literature and previous research, which are also termed *etic* issues. These initial questions were later revised based upon information generated from data analysis, which are also termed *emic* issues. This approach did not reduce the potential for data collection, but rather enabled data analysis to occur during data collection since the researcher interpreted both the data and theory concurrently. Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to this data analysis strategy as the "constant comparative method". By utilizing the constant comparative strategy in this study, the data collection stage was closely connected to the data analysis stage. Consequently, the theoretical framework employed in the study, including archetypes, organizational tracks, and the Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) institutional model of change, was thoroughly analyzed.

Transcription is the process of transforming communicative action into textual form and incorporates both theoretical and technical conventions (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999). Bloom (1993) suggests that the most important goal of transcription is to produce lean accounts that allow for rich interpretations. For this study, a technical and standard format for transcription was adopted. A transcriber converted the 38 interviews into written text. This person was instructed to type verbatim but to handle nuances, such as pauses and delays, with less priority than the actual wording. All transcripts were proofread, an important step that Kvale (1995) argues few researchers conduct, in order to double-check the transcription and determine the inclusion and exclusion of written text.



Data analysis involved specific strategies for thematization. In this study, two strategies, direct interpretation of the individual instance and the categorical aggregation of multiple instances (Stake, 1995), were used to uncover meanings from the case data. Categorical aggregation allowed the emergence of meaning from the repetition of themes, such as frequency counts of the number of participants who believed the CHA merger was poorly planned. Direct interpretation allowed the emergence of meaning from a single instance of data, such as a participant's specific comment regarding the difference between CAHA and Hockey Canada organizational values (Stake, 1995). Each of these strategies was employed in this study because they enabled interpretation based not only upon an independent comment but also upon a collection of impressions within the data.

In addition to thematization strategies, it is important to implement particular mechanisms for coding the data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that data can be selected and organized according to different levels of abstraction. In this study, coding involved three steps, open, axial and selective coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Miles and Huberman, 1994). First, the physical reams of text collected throughout the study, such as transcriptions, documents and field notes, were organized and ordered. Second, text analysis began with the identification of bins of data, such as specific comments in interviews or segments of text in documents. Then, similar bins were selected and placed into various properties in order to eliminate redundant information while at the same time maintaining variety. Finally, properties were categorized to reflect larger concepts and provide the foundation to set substantive theoretical themes.

Thus, open coding involved the analysis of text by sentences or paragraphs (Straus and Corbin, 1998). These bins of data were organized through axial coding into

more general levels of abstraction, called categories and sub-categories. Finally, selective coding facilitated the final connection of data and theory through patterns and concepts that provided a general explanation of what occurred during the CHA merger. For example, one participant in the study commented on the merger dynamics as follows: "I can honestly say that the camps have become more divergent since the merger happened". This statement offered one instance or bin of data that was axial coded into a more general category, termed "schisms" and a sub-category of "growth". In other words, the comment provided evidence that differentiation within the CHA increased after the merger. The data were selectively coded by linking this theme to the more general theoretical perspective, which was Greenwood and Hinings's (1996) model of institutional change, and offered support that schisms were a fluid and continuously developing intra-organizational dynamic of change.

A second data management activity noted by Miles and Huberman (1994) involves data display where data can be organized into matrices, charts and diagrams. This process is not simply data presentation, but an extension of data interpretation where conceptualization and thematization continue. In fact, mapping these components of the analysis can be done using two effective strategies, which include an exploratory effect matrix and a case dynamics matrix (Miles and Huberman, 1994). An exploratory effects matrix addresses "why the outcomes under study occurred and what caused them – specifically and generally?" The case dynamics matrix "displays a set of forces for change and traces the consequential processes and outcomes" (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Both of these strategies were used for analysis in the present study because they were well suited for the presentation style of Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) model of

institutional change. In addition, the two matrices offered an opportunity to explore the degree of conceptual congruence between the data and the theoretical framework of the study. For example, the analysis of the change process, or track, successfully identified archetype variation during the merger, the sequence of configurations at different stages along the track, and triggers for movement from one configuration to another. The analysis of intra-dynamics of change generated a detailed explanation of the characteristics of these internal forces and their inter-relation.

The qualitative case design approach was utilized for this study because it was well suited for a dissertation project that sought to test and elaborate existing theory. Data collection involved multiple methods in order to triangulate data and collect as much information about the CHA merger as possible. Finally, data analysis incorporated a three stage coding process where specific data were grouped into categories and connected according to major themes and patterns. Overall, this research project represented a well-planned qualitative case design and an effective data management process.

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(Selznick, 1957; Hinings and Greenwood, 1988). Therefore, an analysis of institutional development that highlights interest antagonisms must pay special attention to the nature and impact of actors upon institutional perseverance and change.

Institutional theory, which has been a central perspective of studies of change in Canadian sport, focuses upon sectors of organizations and the distinct structures, systems and values organizations possess. The major theme within this perspective is the power exerted by the environment over an organization (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977). However, institutionalization also involves actors who infuse social structures with values (Selznick, 1957) and make decisions that effect institutional change (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988; Child, 1972). This view suggests that institutional agents constitute and reconstitute social structures. Therefore, an analysis that seeks to explain institutional convergence and divergence must recognize both of these perspectives through an examination of social structures and how actors influence their development.

The purpose of the chapter is to outline a context in which to situate the CHA merger case study. The chapter explains how actors, namely the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA), the coalition of civic hockey boosters and entrepreneurs, Hockey Canada (HC) and the National Hockey League (NHL), have shaped the Canadian hockey institutional system and have themselves been shaped by this context. This socio-historical account of the development of the Canadian hockey system describes how the organization and institutionalization of Canadian hockey came about prior to the CHA merger in 1994. A series of eras, or development stages, is described in order to illustrate periods of contradiction among institutional actors, and highlight when ideological



dissension arose among the four institutional actors, the CAHA, the booster/entrepreneur coalition, HC and the NHL. These moments of contention allowed certain actors to challenge the existing social structure of the hockey system and enabled each actor to access emerging power centres at different periods of time. The result was the reconstitution of institutional structures, practices, and beliefs that favoured particular groups within the forum.

Once a new context was established, the actors began to interpret and re-interpret the social structure of the system to the point where a level of resistance, once again, generated a re-configuration of power centres within the forum. Throughout this series of constructions, challenges, and reconstructions, the scale and variance of institutional actors within the Canadian hockey system gradually changed from a small, yet diverse group, into a large and concentrated collection of managerial elites. As a result, the hockey forum experienced early divergence, shifted towards convergence, and now, there exists a powerful condition of institutional perseverance, where an elite group enforces and reinforces a particular set of values and actions within the Canadian hockey institutional system. Consequently, opportunities for change within this forum are minimized.

### **Theoretical Perspective**

An institution can be defined as "a web of inter-related norms, formal and informal, governing social relationships" (Nee and Ingham, 1998). Generally, the

institutional theory-organizational change connection situates organizations as institutions and, as Zucker (1983) suggests, offers fruitful insights into organizational life, as organizations represent important and stable "institutionalized" forms within modern society. However, the greatest criticism of institutional theory in the organizational analysis literature is its over-emphasis upon deterministic explanations of change, which argue that extraneous forces influence organizations, more specifically the members within an organization. According to this view, change is an externally imposed rather than internally generated condition.

Hence, a major theme within the institutional perspective is the power exerted by the environment over an organization. Meyer and Rowan (1977) suggest that organizations exist within an institutional context where they are driven to incorporate the prevailing practices and procedures of organizational life. Such a view, where external forces impose change upon an organization, is a deterministic perspective. The key actors who generate these practices or "taken for granted" beliefs are the state, the professions (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), and other large and powerful organizations (Ritti and Silver, 1986). The process by which institutional rules and expectations are transmitted among organizations involves three types of pressures: coercive, mimetic, and normative (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Within an institutional context, independence is suppressed and strategic choice is limited to the extent that the only discretion organizational members may exercise is the decision over which sector the organization shall enter.

Agency-based views explain organizational change in terms of strategic choice and decision-making processes. Selznick (1957) developed an action-based perspective

that captured the role of agency in creating social institutions. Child (1972) introduced the strategic choice theory of organizational change, which recognizes the importance of agency as a factor in organizational control. Since the strategic choice perspective recognizes that internal forces generate organizational change, it is a voluntaristic perspective. The theory explains how organizational structure is affected by internal elements such as decision-making processes (Child, 1972) and the political power-holders (Miller and Droge, 1986).

A major assumption of the strategic choice view is that strategic decisions made by institutional actors, be they organizations, coalitions, or professional elites, are the key factor influencing institutional development. This perspective minimizes the influence of overriding external constraints, which is presented by the institutional perspective, and suggests that the strategic decisions made by the members of an organization, coalition or elite group are the key factor influencing organizational development. Overall, the voluntaristic perspective focuses upon individual and organization level factors in order to understand the relation between organizational structures and environmental variables (Child, 1972), whereas the deterministic perspective emphasizes organizational-sector and social variables as a mediating factor between an organization and its environment.

Much of the current organizational change literature utilizes either institutional theory or strategic choice theory to explain the nature of organizational transformation. In so doing, organizational change researchers are faced with the challenge of omitting either the voluntaristic or deterministic view, or negotiating an interpretation of organizational transformation that integrates the two views. The explanation of organizational change presented in this dissertation follows Oliver (1991) and seeks to

accommodate a more integrated interpretation by adopting elements of agency into the institutional perspective. In other words, the theoretical perspective utilized in this study integrates deterministic and voluntaristic views of organizational change.

Thus, the relation between an organization and its environment can vary depending upon the degree of agency accommodated within an institutional view of change. An institutional perspective that incorporates strong voluntaristic elements suggests that organizations are embedded in a localized context and explains how an organization influences the direct environment, specifically the organizational sector in which it operates. According to this view, the decisions made by organizational members can impact not only the organization but also the nature of the sector in which the organization exists. An institutional perspective that incorporates predominantly deterministic elements focuses on how the environment, including both the sector and larger societal environment, impacts an organization. In other words, within a voluntaristic perspective the direction of influence is from an organization towards an environment, whereas a deterministic perspective argues the direction of influence is from an environment towards an organization. In addition, the deterministic and voluntaristic orientations within the institutional perspective offer divergent explanations of conflict and change. A deterministic perspective focuses upon homogeneity, stability, and continuity, whereas a voluntaristic view associates change as endemic and suggests that institutions have an evolving and adaptive relation to the environment.

Despite these differences, interest in an integrated explanation of organizational change can be enhanced through interdisciplinary research that identifies and probes theoretical commonalities (Nee, 1998). Institutional theory understands institutions as

social in nature and explains how these entities build upon, homogenize, and reproduce standard expectations which, in turn, stabilize the social order (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). Selznick (1957) recognized institutions as "natural products of social needs and pressures – a responsive, adaptive organism" (p. 5). Hence, he interpreted institutions as active and dynamic social orders. In this framework, institutional creation and change are paramount. This reciprocity between setting and actors situates institutional theory as a process-oriented view (Tolbert and Zucker, 1996; Scott, 1994b) where preferences and power shape an institution while at the same time the institution reshapes the nature of power and preferences. The integration of structure and action, or determinism and voluntarism, also supports the notion that a rational-action perspective (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991) cannot solely explain institutional dynamics. Rather, the political environment within an organization, which consists of the power relations that influence the constitution and reconstitution of an institutional setting, must be recognized, and change, not just stability is an important consideration.

Indeed, various institutional theory explanations recognize the role of actors in organizational and institutional change. Berger and Luckman (1967) identified institutionalization as a core process in the creation and perpetuation of enduring social groups. Here, the outcome of an institutional process is reflected in the habitualized practice of different institutional actors, which as mentioned earlier may consist of organizations, coalitions or professional elites. For example, Selznick (1957) identified the role of top-level organizational members in the creation of powerful symbols, which direct the norms and values reinforced within an institutional setting. In addition, Suchman (1995) believed the elaboration of a social infrastructure depends upon the



idiosyncratic histories of individual collectives and institutional progression. That is, one must examine the gradual institutionalization, or sedimentation, of particular social structures as well as the independent structures that emerge along the way. Scott (1995b) suggested that an institutional perspective includes not only psychological and social elements, but also political aspects in the study of social phenomena and organizations. Zucker (1983) argued that "organizations are not simply constrained by the institutional environment, they often define their own position in it" (p. 12).

The previous discussion regarding institutional theory and strategic choice theory identifies the importance of both structure-based and agency-based views of organizational change. Therefore, an institutional theory that examines both perseverance and change must integrate both deterministic and voluntaristic explanations in order to present a holistic explanation of organizational transformation. Hence, this analysis will focus upon three themes to explore the interplay between voluntaristic and deterministic forces. First, institutionalism is situated primarily as a process that offers a temporal tracking of institutional creation and re-creation. Process explanations of institutionalization illustrate a series of occurrences and assume that the way in which social events arise influences what social events happen (Scott, 1995a; 1995b; 1995c). A historical biography of the Canadian hockey system will identify specific eras, the timing of various events, and the opportunity for action afforded to particular actors within the system.

Second, by situating the institutional hockey system as the focus, both the endogenous actions of actors within the forum and the exogenous influence of forces outside the forum can be captured within the analysis. That is, by setting the Canadian

hockey system as the frame of reference, the micro-level activities of various organizational actors and the macro-level influence of general social and economic forces can be examined. This will highlight the impact of political activities upon institutional development (March and Olsen, 1998).

Finally, this study seeks to understand the coordination and control of certain organizations, coalitions or professional elites over other organizations, coalitions or professional elites within the Canadian hockey institutional system by recognizing that action is an important element of institutionalism. Scott (1994b) identified the internal generation of institutionalized forms and the effects of institutional environments on social structures as two critical components of institutional constitution and reconstitution. Although macro and micro levels are important considerations, the theoretical orientation used to examine organizational change within this study will place a greater emphasis on the endogenous influences of change. In this way, the manner by which actors, be they organizations, coalitions, or professional elites, mobilize and manipulate an institutional system, can be explored.

Overall, this discussion on institutional development within the Canadian hockey system extends the author's earlier work on institutional change (Stevens and Slack, 1998) by focusing upon the important point of convergence between institutional and strategic choice theories. In their analysis of institutional field development, Caronna, Pollack and Scott (1998) identified key actors as "cases" and the field as a "context". They argued that an institutional system develops through the reciprocal interaction between case and context. During the past 100 years, various forces such as the community-based mission of the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA), the

commerce-community focus of the civic hockey booster/entrepreneur coalition, the commercial emphasis of the National Hockey League (NHL), and the capital-nationalist practices of Hockey Canada (HC) have constituted and reconstituted this institutional system. This discussion considers the Canadian hockey system, the context in which these four different "cases" or actors, are embedded, because its historical evolution provides an opportunity to explore the nature of institutionalization as a process where collaborations and contradictions can be reviewed and critiqued. In this way, it is possible to identify and explain particular eras, or historical periods (Jepperson, 1991) within the context, debate the emergence of each case and its relation to other cases, and finally, characterize the interrelation between case and context over an extended period of time.

In order to interpret the nature of change according to an integrated institutional theory-strategic choice perspective, it is important to understand the main structures and activities that provide stability and meaning within an institutional system. Scott (1995a; 1995b; 1994a) outlined three critical areas, or what he termed "pillars", to explain the types of structures and meanings that constitute an institutional system. Scott's (1995a) three "pillars" offer a detailed explanation of how an institution is created, maintained and transformed and, therefore, facilitated an institutional understanding of organizational life. The first pillar, regulative, offers explanations based upon a desire to establish efficient forms or rules, and establish governance structures that enhance stability and order. Conformity is achieved through coercive means that secure legally-sanctioned legitimacy. The second pillar, normative, focuses upon the interconnection between institutionalized values and organizational structures. This explanation builds upon

Selznick's (1957) view that to institutionalize is "to infuse with value" (p. 17) and emphasizes the intrinsic worth, not instrumental value, of structures. Normative explanations of institutionalism suggest actors follow a logic of appropriateness and achieve legitimacy through a moral governance structure. Finally, the cognitive pillar explains institutional development according to the interdependence of cultural distinctions and symbols that various actors introduce. In this case, legitimacy is culturally supported and meanings become embedded into external social structures that both enable and constrain actors. Each of these three areas offers insight into why and how institutional development occurs.

An institutional analysis must also consider where pressures for stability or change exist. A social system involves multiple levels of activity and it is critical to identify the location of institutional forces in order to track development over time. An analysis may simply reveal internally-generated cognitive, normative or regulative situations that trigger change. Whichever type of trigger initiates transformation, successful change involves the reconstruction of interpretive schemes, or institutional values, which are driven by particular actors or, as DiMaggio and Powell (1983) suggest, elites within an institutional system. Stability is regained when these new values and beliefs become constituted into social structures, primarily through repetition and expanding acceptance. On the other hand, external political, economic and social forces may trigger institutional change (Oliver, 1992). When an external trigger occurs, cognitive, normative and regulative elements within the institutional system are re-constituted according to the influence of an external shock. Finally, triggers impacting cognitive, normative or regulative institutional structures and meanings may initiate fast

or slow paced change. An evolutionary perspective of institutional development explains a minimal degree of change occurs over long period of time. A punctuated explanation of change suggests that accumulated pressures can initiate an abrupt transformation in a short period of time.

The following section provides a detailed explanation of the development of the Canadian hockey institutional system. Three main eras are identified (see Figure 3:1) in order to denote periods of institutional stability and change. Four key institutional actors are described in order to recognize the role each actor played in the constitution and re-constitution of cognitive, normative and regulative structures and meanings within the institutional system. The discussion will highlight that this institutional system is a fiercely contested terrain involving numerous antagonisms.

### **Explaining Institutional Divergence and Convergence: The evolution of the Canadian hockey system**

#### ***Stage 1 - Canadian Amateur Hockey Association – National Hockey League Antagonisms, Early 1900s to 1960s***

The Canadian hockey institutional system formally emerged with the creation of the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association in 1914 (see Figure 3:1). Although informal play existed in scattered areas across the country during the early part of the century, the growth of formal competition hastened the creation of the association in order to regulate all activity (Kidd, 1996). As a member of the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada (AAU), which was formed in 1908, the CAHA was recognized as the sole national governing





body for hockey in the Dominion. As was the case with the AAU, the association was driven primarily by upper-class notions of "gentlemenly play" and adopted a powerful amateur philosophy (Metcalf, 1988), which was to "play the game for the game's sake, to strive for victory rather than winning itself, and to demonstrate unending courage, perseverance, fair play, and honesty" (Hall, Slack, Smith and Whitson, 1991: 58)

The cognitive structures characteristic of the Canadian hockey institutional forum during this early stage embraced amateur meanings, which reflected upper-class ideals of simply participating in hockey for the love of the game rather than for financial gain. These cultural principles were supported in the wider normative framework of the CAHA, which structured these beliefs into rules and practices that reinforced values such as community connection and collective involvement. However, the industrialization of Canadian society, which began after 1850, brought advances in transportation, communication, and mass production (Howell and Howell, 1985). By 1900, industrialization introduced new opportunities for Canadians to accumulate wealth and as a result, cultural support for the amateur sport ideal shifted towards more pervasive notions of professional sport (Beamish, 1988).

Gradually, the institutional hockey system came to reflect a site of contradiction as the residual values of amateurism were challenged by the emerging acceptance of commercial sport. By the 1920s, amateur teams, which opted to follow the public interest in top calibre players, decided to allow pay-to-play athletes to register within the leagues. This was a significant shift from the steadfast amateur ideal. The CAHA responded to the growing popular interest in professional hockey by accommodating a degree of professionalism within its regulations rather than lose players and public interest.

Gruneau and Whitson (1993) suggest that when the amateur clubs entered the realm of pay-to-play, they developed a qualitatively different approach to their commercial counterparts. The commercial interests of the game, however, involved entrepreneurs, sometimes rink managers or former amateur clubs, who functioned as independent managers for special hockey events. On the other hand, local businessmen supported the quasi-amateur teams as a matter of civic boosterism. The CAHA community-based league play was often the highlight of town activities, especially in isolated mining and lumber towns like those in northern Ontario or the British Columbia interior. Hence, the emergence of a commercial context within the Canadian hockey forum generated moderate institutional change because the CAHA was able to respond to the public interest in commercial sport by encompassing a small degree of pay-to-play operations into its existing amateur structures. Thus, a new actor, a coalition of hockey civic boosters and entrepreneurs, came to operate within the system alongside the upper-class administrators of the CAHA.

Scott (1995b) suggests that the social construction of actors defines what they see as their interests. Zucker (1977) identified the uniformity, maintenance, and resistance to change of cultural beliefs across generational actors as a key influence on institutional development. The impact of generational actors is a major factor effecting both inertia and change within the Canadian hockey institutional system. Aldrich and Fiol (1994) note that it is important for researchers to focus upon the early years of institutional founding when examining the role of early pioneers.

The efforts of hockey entrepreneurs and boosters to embrace pay-to-play hockey into the formal structure of the system created new commercial hockey power centres

within the hockey system. Thus, the popularity of professional hockey enabled the entry of a second actor into the system – the hockey capitalists (Kidd and Macfarlane, 1972). These actors challenged the normative framework of the CAHA and even moved to usurp the control of entrepreneurs and civic boosters over pay-to-play hockey. The interests of the hockey capitalists were clearly different from those of the CAHA and civic booster groups. Hockey capitalists sought individualistic interests, specifically profit, and viewed hockey teams and players as commodities that they owned. In contrast, the civic booster coalition supported teams for the sake of promoting community identity and unity rather than generating profit (Gruneau and Whitson, 1993). Hence, the hockey capitalists re-configured the institutional structure to serve this purpose. For example, they created the National Hockey League (NHL) in 1917 in order to expedite access to profits and establish a monopoly over every commercial practice within the institutional system (Gruneau and Whitson, 1993; Cruise and Griffiths, 1991; Mcfarlane, 1990). Thus, the NHL represented a regulative body and introduced significantly different values and norms into the hockey forum compared to the CAHA or the hockey booster/entrepreneur coalition.

Thus, the success of profitable hockey ventures generated a new type of symbolism where sport and business became a socially acceptable combination. However, there was a distinction between the degree of commercial orientation particularly between the hockey boosters/entrepreneurs and the hockey capitalists. The capitalists furthered the ideological acceptance of civic booster hockey revenues to encompass professional hockey profits and formalized these cognitive elements into a regulative body – the National Hockey League. Thus, Zucker's (1977) notion of

generational actors is evident here as the residual elite existed within the CAHA, including both upper-class volunteers and community-minded civic boosters, while the emerging elite existed within the NHL.

Gradually, the CAHA was susceptible to the coercive forces of the NHL, which actively sought to regulate the Canadian hockey system through its control over teams and players. The CAHA was disadvantaged by this situation because its control over hockey was undermined by the NHL's actions. Even the Stanley Cup, a trophy donated in 1893 by Lord Stanley, a former Governor General of Canada, for the amateur men's hockey Dominion championship was appropriated by the capitalists in 1910 and promoted as a symbol of professional hockey excellence. When the Stanley Cup became an eastern versus western Canada affair, the national focus and media hype enabled hockey capitalists to build popular support for the professional game (Gruneau and Whitson, 1993). In this way, the symbolic power associated with the trophy supported a commercial hockey structure. By 1926, competition for the trophy was under the exclusive control of the NHL. The Canadian hockey institutional context, originally created by the CAHA and slightly modified by the civic booster, was now completely influenced by one powerful actor - the hockey capitalists.

In the meantime, the amateur pay-to-play teams declined throughout the 1920s. The surge of capital into newly commodified hockey forums, namely the hockey capitalists and their professional hockey enterprises, lured players away from the amateur community-based teams. Even the creation of the Allan Cup earlier in 1908, a trophy for championship play among the senior men's amateur teams throughout the country, could not resist the growing popularity of the Stanley Cup professional forum. This was mainly



due to the fact that the CAHA limited revenues for club operators because of its view that hockey should be non-profit. Although this confirmed the normative amateur framework of the association, it prevented teams from attracting the best hockey talent. Therefore, the CAHA's efforts to resist the NHL failed because the Allan Cup garnered significantly less symbolic recognition within the hockey system, and the commercial-excellence value, reflected by the Stanley Cup, became a dominant institutional meaning.

The Depression of the early 1930s slowed professional hockey expansion and enabled the amateur game to regain some of its community-based norms. The NHL hockey circuit lost popular interest due to the economic hardships of the time, and as a result did not have the revenues to maintain full-scale activities. Once again, the role of hockey in civic boosterism was evident and played an important part in helping Canadians through the hardship of poor economic conditions (Simpson, 1989). In 1937, the CAHA made a serious move that impacted the configuration of the Canadian hockey institutional system. At the 1936 Annual General meeting, the CAHA Board of Directors approved a motion to eliminate any form of pay-to-play competition (CAHA, 1936). Unlike the earlier decision to create the Allan Cup and operate some level of revenue hockey within the amateur ranks, the motion extinguished the civic booster base of amateur men's hockey in the country. Kidd and Macfarlane (1972) argued that the discontinuation of pay-to-play amateur hockey operations allowed the NHL to regain its profile after the Depression era and undermined the conservative ideology of the CAHA. From this point on, the CAHA, reflecting a residual amateur ideal, and the NHL, embracing the popular commercial wave, developed strongly opposed values and antagonistic relations with each other.

Thus, during stage one an important trigger for institutional change was the tension between amateur and professional activities within the hockey system. The CAHA-NHL dichotomy was the result of both external and internal forces and involved the interaction of cognitive and regulative institutional meanings and structures. Oliver (1992) suggests that political, functional and social pressures can trigger change within an institutional domain. Social pressures generate social fragmentation and reduce historical continuity while functional pressures reflect economic competition for resources. The initial challenge to the CAHA's normative hold on the system was from external social forces that encouraged cultural support for commercial hockey. The result was the creation of new "power centres" (Brint and Karabel, 1991) within the system. These centres emanated from internal economic pressures, and actors harboured the authority that became associated with new fiscal, not social opportunities. Specifically, capitalists, such as NHL owners, controlled the popular spectator sport, while little power was exercised by the CAHA volunteers who served a socially-conscious, community-based agenda.

As the 1940s approached, the NHL represented the most powerful sports organization in Canada (Cruise and Griffiths, 1991). There were significant profits to be made by businessmen who owned teams as well as arena facilities. Internally, the NHL was rife with political ploys and personal empire building as owners jockeyed for power and authority to control the league (Cruise and Griffiths, 1991; Kidd and Macfarlane, 1972). The NHL business elite held exclusive power over commercial hockey. For example, league administrators could ban the media from dressing rooms as well as sign players to contracts without specifying remuneration arrangements. This authoritative mentality is clear from the following comment regarding the most powerful NHL owner,

James Norris, whose companies owned three of the six NHL teams in the league until expansion in the 1967-68 season:

Hockey mythology has it that Norris bought into hockey out of his "unquenchable love for the game," but the simple fact is, though hockey was his favourite game, he viewed the sport as an investment, first, last and always". (Cruise and Griffiths, 1991: 38)

It is clear that the NHL acted with extreme self-interest within the Canadian hockey institutional forum, as would any capitalist within an open market. The NHL was an aggressive and self-serving actor that influenced the nature of hockey at all levels.

By the 1950s and 1960s, the effect of the NHL player drain was finally felt in the amateur ranks. Prior to the creation of the amateur draft in 1969, the NHL signed extended agreements with the CAHA to secure "ownership" of amateurs. Minor age players had to sign "C-forms", which committed them to particular NHL franchises. A team had geographical control, where any player in a certain region was automatically its "property". Don Johnson (1995), a former CAHA president and current life member, stated that the "C-form" was "a barbaric system - to say the least" (p. 28). A 1964 letter to Mr. Lionel Fleury, President of the CAHA, from Mr. Robert LeBel (1964), a CAHA life member, alluded to the NHL control as follows:

No doubt, many of them [CAHA members] would like to see the association break away from the pro and cancel any agreement that they may have together. For some, they think that to do such a thing is a matter of money but we know that is not so, and the best way to come to this end is to work all angles, maybe give notice of cancellation of our agreement with the pro .... (p.1).

In addition, the commercial appeal of the NHL grew when media coverage of the game moved from radio to television. The first "Hockey Night in Canada" national broadcast in 1952 offered an exclusive cultural medium through which the NHL promoted its commercial-excellence image and built tremendous domination through popular support of the "Original Six" golden era, which included the Toronto Maple Leafs, Montreal Canadiens, Boston Bruins, New York Rangers, Chicago Blackhawks, and Detroit Red Wings.

The onset of televised professional hockey in the early 1950s furthered the commercial emphasis within the hockey system and created a second trigger for change within the forum. In fact, the growth of a professional hockey-television connection during stage one impelled new power centres to emerge later in stage two. The domestic jurisdiction of the CAHA situated it as the sanctioned national body and afforded it membership within the International Ice Hockey federation (IIHF). The growth of televised sport, not just hockey, initiated a new appetite among the Canadian public for media-sport spectacles (Kidd, 1995). In this way, the commercial momentum created opportunities for international hockey prestige that potentially favoured the CAHA, not the NHL. Therefore, the CAHA's regulation of these activities afforded it some apparent control of the power centres in which these new international hockey practices operated within the institutional system. In the end, professional-amateur tension within the system expanded to include a cultural debate over the value of domestic versus international hockey.

By mid-century, the commercial and community interests in hockey were

embedded in separate organizations: the NHL and CAHA respectively. The CAHA Board of Directors, which consisted of affluent gentlemen who served as the volunteer administrators, first operated alongside the coalition of hockey civic boosters and entrepreneurs and then competed against the hockey capitalists. Hence, these three actors, the CAHA, the boosters/entrepreneurs and the NHL, existed within the hockey system and competed for dominance. The CAHA relied upon normative elements that focused upon the interconnection between amateur norms and appropriate structures to serve those values. On the other hand, the civic booster/entrepreneur coalition sought to serve the amateur spirit while at the same time financially supporting local teams and players. Ultimately, it was the NHL that captured the cultural significance of the "hockey commodity" and established regulative control over commercial practices. This state of divergence reflected new institutional meanings and structures in which commercial hockey spectacles gained prominence and actors had to conform to these new conditions in order to gain legitimacy.

### ***Stage 2 – National Identity and the Birth of Hockey Canada, Late 1960s to 1980s***

Although the Canadian federal government began to fund amateur sport in Canada as early as the late 1800s when it supported the Dominion Rifle Association (Kidd, 1996), it did not become a direct provider of amateur sport until 1961 with the passage of Bill C-131, the *Fitness and Amateur Sport Act* (see Figure 3:1). During the 1960s, federal government intervention in amateur sport focused upon the development of a



comprehensive infrastructure (Government of Canada, 1965). From 1961 until 1969, several initiatives were undertaken including: federal-provincial cost sharing agreements for sport and physical education, the formation of a National Advisory Council, the distribution of grants to sport governing bodies, the creation of the Canada Games program, and the allocation of physical education and recreation scholarships for research in higher education (Macintosh et al., 1987).

Federal government involvement in the Canadian hockey system was spurred by the dismal performances of the amateur national men's hockey team in international competitions. In fact, the decline of the amateur ranks coupled with the rapid growth of televised NHL hockey prompted federal government intervention in the ongoing CAHA-NHL conflict. In 1966, the Hockey Study Committee of the National Advisory Council of Fitness and Amateur Sport initiated a project on the state of hockey in Canada. In 1967, its first report, titled *The Report on Amateur Hockey in Canada*, offered 34 recommendations for improving the game. One particular outcome was the formation of the Canadian Hockey Foundation, whose mandate was to give moral and financial support to amateur hockey. The foundation was a charitable organization that set itself apart from the existing hockey structure and sought to intervene in the CAHA-NHL agreements (Hockey Canada, 1985). The second and third reports, titled *Minor Age Hockey in Canada* and *Canada's National Team, Amateurism and the Amateur Sport Governing Body*, respectively, were released in 1968 (Hockey Canada, 1985). These reports heightened the degree of activity within the institutional domain. According to comments recorded in the CAHA 1970 Annual General Meeting minutes, many CAHA members felt this series of reports was a movement to discredit their organization while at

the same time, present a very pro-NHL position (CAHA, 1970).

State influence upon institutional development has been identified as a powerful enforcer that pressures organizations to conform to existing forms and practices (Thomas and Meyer, 1984). During stage two, the state was clearly set on harnessing the new "international hockey" power centre within the forum, primarily for its political capital. In 1969, the federal government struck a task force to review amateur sport in Canada that resulted in the *Task Force Report on Sports for Canadians* (Government of Canada, 1969). The most significant impact of the report was the recommendation that a new hockey agency, called Hockey Canada (HC), be formed to manage the national men's hockey team. This was the only national team that existed at the time, since a national women's team program was not created until 1990. Hence, instead of simply encouraging existing organizations, such as the CAHA and NHL, to adopt specific practices, the state actually entered the system by creating its own entity – Hockey Canada.

As the primary force behind the creation of Hockey Canada, the federal government controlled the initial actions of the agency and even though the NHL and CAHA had representation on the Board, they had little input. HC had two formal mandates: "to support, operate, manage and develop national hockey teams for the purpose of representing Canada at international competitions", and "to foster and support the game of hockey in Canada through the development of skill and competence of Canadian Hockey players" (Hockey Canada, 1985). HC leaders viewed the agency as a "viable organization [that was] put together bearing in mind the components of any successful business organization – money, program and people" (Hockey Canada,

1970b). The agency aggressively and independently sought to develop international hockey events that incorporated professional players and allowed Canada to re-establish its global dominance in the sport. Nevertheless, over time the NHL, with its National Hockey League Player's Association (NHLPA) and corporate sector allies, became the most dominant force within HC.

Despite claims that the impetus for creating Hockey Canada was to reduce antagonisms within the Canadian hockey system, the agency actually magnified these tensions. Efforts to curtail NHL domination were undermined from the outset by designating representatives from the NHL, the NHLPA, and the corporate sector on the Hockey Canada Board of Directors. These business constituents gained direct input into HC operations and, gradually, the agency became controlled by the very commercial interests that it had been designed to overcome. In fact, HC's early formation was founded upon the ideals of corporatization and professionalization, and created greater symbolic diversity within the hockey system as a whole.

The desire to enhance the national team program occurred at a time when Canada was primed to withdraw from the international hockey stage. In the late 1960s, the CAHA negotiated with the International Ice Hockey federation (IIHF) to allow nine professional players to participate on its roster at the World Championships. However, in 1970, the IIHF and its British president, Bunny Ahearne, reneged on this agreement. John Monroe, the federal government minister responsible for amateur sport, called a special meeting of government officials, representatives from Hockey Canada, and the Board of Directors of the CAHA to a meeting to discuss the situation (Johnson, 1995). In the spring of 1970, the CAHA, as the IIHF representative, announced its intent to

withdraw from international competition. Canada's retreat from international men's hockey was a principled decision to take a stand against the IIHF and its European members who often manipulated Canada through political ploys and blockades.

Canadian withdrawal from official competition was not accompanied by a policy of isolationism and Hockey Canada pursued opportunities in the unregulated "private" international hockey sphere. HC started quickly into negotiations with hockey federations from other countries to establish an "open competition" where NHL players competed against European national teams. Its lobbying efforts generated a political conundrum where HC, the CAHA, and the federal government battled for control over the political and financial capital of a new commercial hockey event. The CAHA exercised its regulative position as official national governing body to ensure its decision-making role in all international hockey events that were staged in Canada. In contrast, HC sought to re-configure the Canadian hockey institutional system by creating its own "open" competitions and by establishing unilateral authority over Canada's participation in this new international hockey area. Finally, the federal government focused upon the political capital associated with the cultural popularity of hockey in Canada and also used its regulatory role to utilize each international hockey event as a tool to cultivate national unity and identity. Thus, three very active visions were battling each other and re-constituting the Canadian hockey institutional context.

In the end, it was Hockey Canada which garnered the strongest profile by situating itself as the primary host of various international events, including the 1972 Canada-Russia Summit Series, the 1974 World Hockey Association (WHA)-Russia Challenge Cup, and the inaugural 1976 Canada Cup (CAHA, 1987). The 1972 Canada-Russia

Summit Series and the subsequent Canada Cup tournaments generated major revenues. However, once these profits were distributed among HC, the NHLPA as player remuneration, and corporate sponsors, little was left for the CAHA. While it is clear that the business elite of the NHL and the NHLPA used Hockey Canada to generate profits for themselves, the federal government also captured tremendous political favour with the Canadian public. All of these actors clearly sought to minimize the role of the CAHA and its normative community framework. For example, a 1985 HC report stated that "the CAHA's mandate was reduced to the administration of domestic programs in Canada" (Hockey Canada, 1985: 2). Other statements included claims that "Hockey Canada pulled out of international competition" without any recognition of the CAHA's crucial role in the 1970 decision. Hockey Canada reconstituted the institutional system in its favour by distributing pro-HC reports and brochures that situated it as the dominant institutional actor. The new political and economic values and rules established not just by Hockey Canada but also by the federal government impacted the institutional context to such an extent that there was a complete disregard of both the regulative and normative powers of the CAHA.

The CAHA continuously operated from a position of "catch-up". The association fought for involvement and recognition during the planning and hosting stages of the various international events through the 1970s. It had a minimal role in the 1974 Challenge Cup by organizing the technical aspects for the event and preparing the international referees and other game officials (CAHA, 1974). Its role in the Canada Cups, which began in 1976, was also minimal since Hockey Canada dominated all decisions regarding the management of the event. The IIHF agreed to participate in the



six-country tournament only on the condition that Canada return to international amateur hockey competition, namely the world championship and Olympic events. The CAHA was essentially coerced into supporting the agreement and, in order to maintain legitimacy, it provided a formal statement of Canada's intent to return to IIHF competition for the 1977 season. It was a difficult political fight as the momentum of these events enabled Hockey Canada to establish significant decision-making power. The agency's control was complete when the CAHA transferred the rights for managing the national men's team to the agency and assumed a secondary role in amateur as well as professional international hockey.

In addition to employing coercive pressures, Hockey Canada developed a strong position within the hockey system by promoting its business-like normative framework within the institutional context. This was achieved through commissioned studies in which Hockey Canada promoted both its men's national team and hockey development mandates. A series of organizational reports developed throughout the 1970s included a four-part study examining general hockey information and attitudes, attitudes to the NHL, international hockey, and hockey and its relation to lifestyle (Hockey Canada: 1970a; 1971a; 1971b). These studies addressed areas such as guidelines for HC's development, management philosophy, organizational objectives, goals and plans, and the 1972-1977 projected program goals (Hockey Canada, 1972a; 1972b). The reports were very detailed and professional, and in this way, were superior to documents produced by other hockey constituents at the time, particularly the CAHA. Thus, HC established a profile as an organization with many resources and considerable managerial expertise. In addition, the studies increased its acceptance by other institutional actors such as university

researchers, hockey sponsors, government officials, and marketing-consulting agencies, many of whom were actually commissioned to carry out these reviews.

Hockey Canada became involved in domestic hockey development in the early 1970s when it test marketed two development programs - the Skills Improvement Program and the Coaches Certification Program. Despite these early efforts, a 1972 Hockey Canada report identified four impediments to the future success of HC hockey development initiatives (Hockey Canada, 1972a). First, the high degree of regional disparity in the country would require an overly expansive selection of programs tailored to the needs of different areas. Second, it was difficult to understand the motivations and interests of volunteers, a critical component for successful program delivery. Third, despite the inclusion of the CAHA on Hockey Canada's Board of Directors, development programs still needed to be sanctioned by provincial and local level associations within the CAHA. Finally, the fact that HC was a public as opposed to private organization posed difficulties, since the agency was accountable to multiple constituents and this might hinder innovative program delivery. Each of these barriers reflected fundamental elements of the CAHA. Hockey Canada positioned these factors as problematic and publicly labelled the CAHA to be an ineffective organization. Consequently, HC leaders suggested that the agency operate as a separate authority to design and implement development programs, and that such an arrangement was in the best interest of all Canadian hockey constituents.

Prior to its attempt to enter domestic hockey programming, Hockey Canada capitalized upon commercial growth within the Canadian hockey context and generated powerful regulatory and normative institutional structures and meanings within the

system. HC exercised a great deal of coercive pressure upon other actors within the Canadian hockey institutional system, including the CAHA, the state, and even the NHL, and the institutional context rested upon this configuration for some time. However, its movement into development programs re-ignited tensions between itself and the CAHA. In the minds of CAHA leaders, development was clearly its jurisdiction and reflected the very essence of its normative framework - a community-based amateur association - and HC had encroached upon the CAHA's jurisdiction. As a result, HC's initiatives triggered a new debate within the hockey system between itself and the CAHA over domestic hockey development and international events. These tensions offered a new opportunity for the CAHA to challenge the status quo, which placed HC as the most powerful actor within the hockey system

In the meantime, the federal government employed the new political meanings within the hockey forum as a means to foster its prominent role (Kidd, 1995). As a result of publicity surrounding Team Canada's dismal participation at the 1977 World Championships, the Honourable Iona Campagnolo, Minister of State, Fitness and Amateur Sport, formed a committee of MPs to study and evaluate Canadian participation in international hockey. This initiative re-emphasized the issues previously identified in the 1969 *Task Force on Sports for Canadians* (Government of Canada, 1969). In a way, it imitated Hockey Canada's strategy of generating popular support through well-promoted hockey studies. The committee interviewed over 100 groups and individuals, reviewed a large number of briefs, and collected questionnaires from over 12,000 Canadians (Campagnolo, 1977). The report stated that Hockey Canada should be enabled, primarily through the designation of authority and allocation of resources from

the federal government, to better serve its role and mandates, including management of Team Canada and the Olympic team. In contrast, the report mentioned the CAHA only in terms of its domestic hockey responsibilities and its membership on the IIHF Council. These commentaries were intended to legitimize the federal government and HC through state sponsorship of status and formal authority. As the report stated:

Canada must be willing to accept these [international hockey] challenges, but it must do so on an equal footing with its adversaries. The reality of our situation has not escaped the committee ... It follows that, if only our most competent players represent us on the ice, then only our most able negotiators represent us at the international hockey bargaining table ... Therefore, we urge that some re-alignment within Canada's delegation at the IIHF be made to ensure that all factions of Canadian hockey are heard... Specifically, it is recommended that the Canadian nominee to the Council of the IIHF be selected by Hockey Canada and nominated and endorsed by the two Canadian delegates to the IIHF (Campagnolo, 1977: 5).

The federal government's hockey interventions were unlike any role it took regarding other amateur or professional sports up to that time. The state's actions had typically focused upon funding and administrative directives, not governance and international representation issues.

As the political and economic stakes of international men's hockey grew, the state opted to align itself more closely with Hockey Canada and pressured the CAHA into playing a secondary role in the Canadian hockey system. Based upon the previous discussion of Hockey Canada and federal government actions following the formation of the agency, it is evident that each actor tried to portray the CAHA as an inept administration and place blame on the association for the current dismal state of the game. In reality, the federal government and HC held a more direct role than the CAHA

in the Canadian men's team international performances. Nevertheless, there emerged a belief that the CAHA was incapable of effectively managing Canadian hockey and that Hockey Canada, supported by the state, was a preferred and promising option. This created strong normative pressures as the dominant practices and beliefs within the institutional system were reconfigured around the need for business, corporate, and political expertise within hockey management. Overall, the renewed state-HC partnership increased the numbers of actors within the hockey system, since the federal government and HC existed along with the CAHA and NHL. However, the degree of ideological diversity within the institutional hockey forum decreased, since the state and HC primarily pursued corporate goals which were closely aligned with the commercial interests of the NHL rather than the community interests of the CAHA. In other words, HC reinforced existing commercial values within the hockey system rather than introduce new values.

The CAHA resisted attempts to erode its legitimacy within the Canadian hockey institutional system, although its efforts produced varying levels of success. Throughout the 1970s, Hockey Canada, or more specifically its "international negotiator" and Board member, Alan Eagleson, controlled all major open international men's hockey events. By the 1980s, however, the CAHA was able to challenge HC's domination within the hockey system by resisting the agency's control in three areas. First, the CAHA fought HC efforts to infringe upon its jurisdiction over domestic hockey development, as was mentioned earlier in this chapter. Second, the CAHA successfully negotiated with Hockey Canada to have \$1 million of the revenues from the 1976 Canada Cup allocated to the CAHA in the form of a trust. The fund was intended to generate annual revenues



of approximately \$90,000 from the interest of the trust for CAHA hockey development programs. However, HC failed to transfer the annual interest fee payments to the CAHA by 1978 thereby reneging on the agreement. As a result, the CAHA withdrew from the Board of Hockey Canada and planned to legally challenge HC regarding the trust fund agreement. The threat of a suit placed HC on the defensive and, ultimately, the agency transferred the funds to the CAHA.

Third, the CAHA expanded its managerial and international activities. At its Board of Directors meeting in May 1980, the CAHA approved the formation of a Five-Year-Plan committee and the extension of its Olympic Committee into a more expansive International Committee (CAHA, 1980a). Both of these actions attempted to re-establish the CAHA's regulative and normative legitimacy within the Canadian hockey institutional system. The CAHA organized various international hockey developments, but these involved tours for amateur senior (Allan Cup division) and junior men's teams, not the national squad. The CAHA still dealt primarily with regulations and events. Some marketing initiatives secured sponsorship for certain events, although these efforts were couched within a context of fiscal conservatism and included conditions whereby any sponsorship initiative had to include sufficient return to the CAHA to justify the time and expense of the CAHA's Marketing Director (CAHA, 1980b). In 1982, the CAHA initiated its first Program of Excellence (POE) with the Under-20 national team program, later referred to as the Junior (men's) National Team. Its gold medal performance in 1982 spurred POE growth with Under-17 and Under-18 programs being created in 1984 and 1985 respectively. The expansion of international men's hockey into younger age categories increased CAHA involvement, since Hockey Canada's role was limited to the

men's senior national team program.

Thus, the CAHA battled HC not only on economic terms by claiming that the agency failed to meet its contractual agreement, but also by proactively adopting international programs of its own. Its ability to access resources and power according to the new business-based institutional logic empowered the CAHA to re-assert its position. In addition, the CAHA challenged federal government support for Hockey Canada by demonstrating its new managerial prowess and by emphasizing its role as the official voting member of the Canadian Olympic Association and governor of all international hockey programs in the country (CAHA, 1980a). The CAHA's actions, however, influenced its ideological traditions. In order to challenge HC and the NHL, the association had to act according to the business-political logic that structured the power centres within the Canadian institutional hockey system. That is, the CAHA had to act like its adversary and adapt its beliefs in order to regain any institutional authority. This change in strategy resulted in the infiltration of the dominant business-political values into the CAHA normative framework, which for many decades had resisted corporate and commercial pressures. Thus, the degree of institutional diversity among the actors decreased and, after so many years of divergence, a new stage of institutional convergence began.

By this time, there were three main actors within the hockey context – the CAHA, the NHL, and Hockey Canada. The re-configuration of the institutional hockey system was the result of separate actors obtaining and utilizing the new resources and opportunities associated with international hockey according to their own interests. The pattern also reflected a process of transformation where external forces, such as economic

pressures related to industrialization and the state, initiated particular political interests, such as national unity and identity (Macintosh and Whitson, 1990). These economic and political pressures created early top-down change within the hockey system, which was followed by direct bottom-up organizational development. Stage two characterized the most antagonistic period in Canadian hockey institutional development. As a result, tremendous divergence emerged, based upon growing distinctions among interpretive schemes and competing ideologies that collectively translated into formal organizational boundaries.

### *Stage 3 – The Corporate Hockey System, 1990 until Present*

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, CAHA - HC relations brought about some mutual economic and political opportunities. Although the NHL still presented a significant influence, its role continued to be mediated through Hockey Canada where many NHL owners served on the Board. Several factors led to the emergence of an organizational partnership between the two adversaries. There was a general trend within the Canadian amateur sport system to adopt professional and corporate management practices and this influenced how the CAHA and HC interacted (Macintosh and Whitson, 1990). In a 1988 CAHA position paper for the Canadian International Hockey Committee, a joint CAHA-HC committee, the CAHA stated that the period "1988-1989 offered a new era for Canada's international hockey programs". The document extended a formal agreement between the two actors that outlined shared international hockey

responsibilities: HC would focus on the national men's team and events involving professional hockey players such as the international Canada Cup tournament, while the CAHA's responsibility was the Under-20 men's international competition and IIHF representation. Hockey Canada formed a permanent national team program in 1984 and was given permission by the CAHA to operate the team for the 1984 and 1988 Olympic Games. It was stated that this joint committee offered a "new and collectively stronger body to guide Canada's international hockey destiny" (CAHA, 1988: 10).

In 1988, the CAHA and HC agreed to a six-year extension of the national team operation agreement and gave Hockey Canada permission to prepare for the 1992 and 1994 Winter Olympics. Clearly the administrative connections between the two organizations encouraged further organizational integration, primarily through international committees and the national men's team program. However, these interconnections were vague about control and accountability of expenses, such as administrative and team management costs, and revenues from sponsorships and event prize money. Concern arose over the protection of CAHA interests and whether revenues from CAHA-HC initiatives was being funnelled into a common account (CAHA, 1990). Discussions at the 1990 CAHA Annual General Meeting revealed a significant difference of opinion between the professional staff of the CAHA who supported these joint ventures with Hockey Canada, and the CAHA senior volunteers, who looked upon any HC interaction with great cynicism (CAHA, 1990).

In addition to the ambiguity over CAHA-HC cooperation or conflict, Hockey Canada faced internal strife. Questions regarding the conduct of the NHLPA and its Executive Director, Alan Eagleson, emerged in 1989. Eagleson was also a member of

Hockey Canada's Board of Directors and sat on the CAHA-HC joint International Committee. Members of the NHLPA raised concerns regarding the financial management of their union dues and initiated an investigation that ultimately led to criminal charges being brought against Eagleson in the United States in 1994 and in Canada in 1996 (O'Hara, 1998; Conway, 1995; Cruise and Griffiths, 1991). Eagleson's departure from the NHLPA and Hockey Canada shortly after charges were laid neutralized Hockey Canada's and the NHL's direct control over the CAHA, since its power hinged upon Eagleson's ability to deliver professional players to IIHF events. In addition, debates emerged over "ownership" of the Centre of Excellence (COE) and Hockey Institute in Calgary. Hockey Canada declared it owned this operation whereas the CAHA argued that the COE was founded on the principle that no one constituent could claim control since the program involved an integrated delivery system (CAHA, 1993b). This debate was fueled by the CAHA's decision not to renew the contractual agreement for HC to manage the men's national team and to have control revert back to the association after the 1994 Winter Olympics.

Having lost its role in the national team program and the ability to secure NHLPA cooperation, HC scrambled to maintain its dominant role within the Canadian hockey institutional system. Aside from its tenuous claims to owning the COE, HC's only power was based upon its access to the lucrative sponsorship it had forged during its management of the national men's team. On the other hand, the CAHA resolved to limit, perhaps even eliminate HC's control within the hockey system as is evident in this comment by association president, Murray Costello:



Looking at the history of hockey in this country and our relations with Hockey Canada, I know in the time that I have been here we have bent over backwards to accommodate a working relationship. However, by reason of the fact that the mandate of that organization is really quite narrow, and in that respect quite fragile, they are in many ways attempting to parallel the things we do as opposed to working with us and delivering programs through us (CAHA, 1993a: 205).

The CAHA intended to re-assert its managerial, financial and political authority within Canadian hockey. In January 1993, CAHA Chairman Frank Libera commented on negotiations with HC as follows: "with salemanship there has to be some substance too, so don't underestimate who we are, what we are, and how much we are needed by them [Hockey Canada]" (CAHA, 1993a: 207). The CAHA wanted to prevent HC from accessing lucrative sponsorship and government funding that it felt were needed by its community members, not HC.

By May 1993, the competitive situation between the CAHA and HC had reached a point where the CAHA was primed to assume a dominant role within the Canadian hockey institutional system. However, rather than continue its resistance and move to shut down the HC operation through its reclamation of national team programs and COE involvement, the CAHA agreed to an organizational merger with its historical adversary. The oppositional tone of earlier discussions had changed to one of partnership, as Murray Costello alluded to in May at the Annual General Meeting with the following statement on HC relations: "In this regard, the thinking is that if there were a single-line organization the whole system in Canada would work better" (CAHA, 1993b: 67). Hence, in May 1994, the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and Hockey Canada

formally merged to create the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA). Unfortunately, rather than resolve the historical antagonisms, the decision simply set these tensions within a single organization and left only two actors within the Canadian hockey institutional system – the new Canadian Hockey Association and the National Hockey League.

In contrast to stage two where institutional divergence increased, stage three involved a clear trend toward institutional convergence. Several factors encouraged organizational collaboration and resulted in institutional integration. First, joint ventures were created between the CAHA and HC that had two major impacts. The antagonisms subsided between the two entities and the cooperation enabled a CAHA-HC alliance to gain a stronger institutional position against the NHL. Second, the more frequent exchanges between the two institutional actors initiated ideological blending. The underlying force creating antagonisms within the Canadian hockey system was based upon the strong philosophical and ideological differences between the managerial elites within the various institutional actors. However, an increased degree of interaction among the elites shifted the previously diverse collection of decision-makers into one dominant mass. As a result, the opposition among actors declined and a new coalition embraced a particular dominant set of values and practices. The particular values and practices that persevered were transferred from the HC/NHL nexus within the institutional hockey system, not from the CAHA. Therefore, although the CAHA continued to function as an organization within the system, it clearly lost its interpretive distinction and strength within the institutional forum.

In addition to the role of institutional actors, be they organizations, coalitions or

professional elites, and the impact of external forces upon an institutional context, a third factor that influences institutional development is the power difference among actors at the time of founding (Boeker, 1988). In particular, institutional actors that are either young or have a long tenure offer greater persistence. The socio-historical account of the CAHA presents two explanations for the low and high levels of power the association experienced throughout the three eras. Compared to other institutional actors, the CAHA was an older entity and, therefore at key times harnessed little power, particularly when new actors, such as the NHL, federal government, and Hockey Canada, burst upon the scene. However, its latent power, which emerged after various triggers occurred, arose from its lengthy tenure and deep embeddedness within the Canadian institutional hockey system. In other words, the normative framework of the CAHA experienced its greatest strength at the earliest and latest stages of its existence, such that at the time of the CHA merger, it was in a position to harbour full control of the institutional system. The question is why did the CAHA, after so many years of perseverance, experience such a degree of convergence that its regulative and normative presence collapsed into a new organizational form? The answer rests upon the role of cognitive elements in directing institutional development.

#### **Key Points Regarding Tight and Loose Coupling in the Canadian Hockey Institutional System**

Caronna et al. (1998) explain how the influence of actors (institutional practices) upon context (institutional structures) depends upon the degree of coupling of the context

itself and the congruence of the actor to the context. In tightly coupled systems, actors who enter the forum and are distinct from the context are able to disrupt the existing social construction and generate institutional change. Early institutional formation revolved around the CAHA and the normative strength of this actor moved the context from a loose to a tight institutional configuration. When exogenous economic and social pressures impacted the system, such as the popular support for professional hockey that occurred in stage one, an innovation resulted in the formation of the NHL. The entry of a new actor created a degree of uncertainty within the system and, as a result, loosened the degree of coupling as actors sought to deal with cognitive and regulative institutional upheaval. Over time, the power centres within the system allowed the NHL and CAHA to establish stable roles and therefore, by the end of stage one, the context had returned to a tightly coupled system.

Later, in stage two, state pressure had a direct and significant influence upon the tightly coupled hockey institutional context. Indeed, Caronna et al. (1998) suggest that tightly coupled systems have a high level of responsiveness to exogenous shocks. Stage two represented a second wave of divergence as Hockey Canada was founded on different ideological and normative modes from both the CAHA and the NHL. HC's emergence was due to the growing appeal of televised sport and the recognition by nation states that televised sport could be utilized as a political tool to promote national unity and identity. As a result, the condition of contradiction changed from the amateur-professional argument that existed in stage one to a domestic development versus international competition debate in stage two.

The identification of three eras in Canadian hockey evolution illustrates the

influence of both external and internal forces on institutional development. In addition, the sequence of stages reveals an overall pattern of divergence and convergence within the hockey forum (see Figure 3:1 on p. 43). Social structures offer opportunity for resistance according to the resources and practices that are established during certain institutional eras. Instances of resistance are only able to operate to a point where they create new centres of power that can be accessed by other, more privileged institutional elites. A key exogenous pressure triggers these changes and re-configures the power pattern within the institutional. Brint and Karabel (1991) suggest that institutional expansion occurs when an institutional actor introduces a practice that, over time, comes to be seen as legitimate and is supported by the elite. They refer to this as elite sponsorship and present an example where community college administrators pursued vocational training programs so that gradually the state supported their practices as a legitimate educational forum. However, this account of institutional development within the Canadian hockey system offers a different perspective – one of elite usurpation, not sponsorship. Unlike Brint and Karabel's (1991) suggestion, the state acted as an institutional usurper, not sponsor, as it accessed the power centres to introduce new practices and re-configure the institutional context accordingly.

When the commercial swell impacted the hockey system, the CAHA and its orientation towards community-based hockey was not yet established across the whole institutional system. The forum reflected a loosely coupled system and although the CAHA was beginning to dominate, other actors still had a degree of discretion over how to interpret the professional sport pressures. The trigger for change in stage two presented an economic and political rallying point focused upon international hockey.



The NHL's jurisdiction was limited to a North American-based league and the CAHA was still community focused, despite its international role as the Canadian representative on the IIHF. The state created HC as a means to capture the political capital that existed in the void between the normative frames of these two institutional actors. Indeed, Caronna et al. (1998) suggest that an external force impacts a tightly bounded system through unintentional consequences and can generate institutional change. In this case, the introduction of Hockey Canada into the hockey forum generated a very competitive, uncollaborative context and accomplished little of what the state intended.

The stages also reflect cognitive contradictions among the CAHA, the civic booster/entrepreneur coalition, NHL, and HC that spurred divergence. Stages one and two introduced powerful external forces that created debates over amateur-professional and domestic-international hockey themes. In stage three, internal forces drove the community-corporate contradiction between the CAHA and the HC-NHL association. The HC-NHL alliance emphasized a corporate and professionalization logic that gradually gained cognitive momentum and propelled the CAHA on a course towards a similar normative frame. In stage three, the introduction of corporatization pressures upon the tightly bounded system once again resulted in unintentional consequences, but in this case, it led to institutional convergence. The context embraced both the capital logic of the NHL and the political-nationalist logic of HC. The CAHA's desire to regain control of practices within the hockey forum meant that it had to abandon its early community sport values and move towards each of these cognitive spheres.

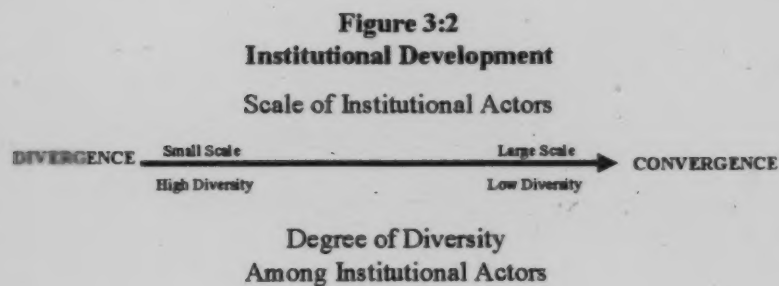
However, the high degree of coupling within the system meant that it could only gain a position of strength by reconstituting its normative framework, not by modifying

the context itself. The CAHA achieved this change, first, through organizational linkages with Hockey Canada in the late 1980s and, later, through the more drastic measure of merging with HC. In the end, the integration created even more institutional convergence as historical antagonisms collapsed into one institutional actor.

Exogenous forces acting upon a tightly bounded system appear to generate fundamental or revolutionary institutional change. This is due to the fact that the system is not flexible enough to absorb the pressures and exercise some discretion over how these cognitive elements are negotiated into the existing context. In the Canadian hockey forum, the tight coupling resulted in the creation of new institutional actors, first in the NHL, second in Hockey Canada, and finally, in the formation of the Canadian Hockey Association. By the end of stage three, the institutional system was comprised of a small number of actors consisting of ideologically focused coalitions and professional elites. The high degree of consensus can be explained according to what Brint and Karabel (1991) refer to as the mental sets of organizational elites. The operational and ideological approach of current elites resembles a corporate-management logic. Individual leaders within the system are situated within one organization, the CHA, or move easily between the CHA and the NHL. This is very different from previous stages where there were fewer individuals working in the system who clearly maintained allegiance to a particular organization and rarely moved across organizational boundaries.

Strang and Meyer (1994) suggest that institutional diffusion is enhanced when there is a high level of perceived similarity among actors. The hockey system has moved from a small collection of elites with high diversity to a large mass of individuals with low diversity because the normative frames of each group have less differentiation than in

the past (see Figure 3:2). Even though both the CHA and the NHL have significant size



and involve a greater number of members than at any other time during the development of the Canadian hockey institutional system, it is clear the degree of ideological and normative difference has declined. Therefore, in tightly-coupled systems, low scale and high diversity motivates institutional divergence whereas a large scale combined with low diversity encourages convergence. The collapse of institutional actors into a large, homogenous mass encourages institutional stability and perseverance, not change.

### Conclusion

The creation of the CAHA in 1914 provided a normative benchmark against which further institutional development was focused. At times external forces introduced

new actors into the system who contradicted the CAHA's normative foundation. However, every action generates a reaction and, although the social construction of the Canadian hockey institutional system was modified, contextual change enabled not only new but also existing actors to operate within the alternative structure. Knight and Sened (1998) suggest that there is strong evidence to support the notion that institutions within similar environments do not converge to particular institutional structures, mainly because of the existence of deterministic actors and multiple opportunities for change. However, this review of change within the Canadian hockey institutional system contradicts this claim by revealing how the institution shifted from divergent towards convergent orientations and gradually evolved into one general cognitive, normative and regulative framework.

Overall, this analysis of the Canadian hockey system reveals four important insights regarding the development of the Canadian hockey institutional system. First, it illustrates that the institutional context gravitated towards a tightly coupled condition. Second, within a tightly coupled context, resistance initiated de-coupling up to a point where an external force created a level of contradiction among actors and their interpretations of the institutional context. Third, this contradiction afforded access by certain institutional actors to new power centres and it was the cognitive, normative and regulative institutional meanings and structures of these entities that determined the character of the hockey system during the next era. Finally, the repetitive cycle of tight coupling, external influence, and contradiction over time increased the scale, but decreased the diversity of the managerial elite within the institutional system.

As previously diverse institutional interests come to be nestled within one formal

structure, the CHA, the future direction of institutional development appears to be focused upon perseverance rather than change. However, the logics and contexts that created this stable foundation depend upon the particular interpretive schemes and structures that emerged within the new CHA. On the one hand, certain features of one domain, either the CAHA community or the Hockey Canada-NHL corporate sphere, may come to dominate and provide the thrust for a broader institutional foundation. On the other hand, a new hybrid institutional domain may emerge in the aftermath of the negotiated intersection of each case, and may present a blended institutional foundation for hockey in Canada. A complete account of which trend actually emerged within the Canadian hockey system will be addressed in chapters four and five of this dissertation.



## CHAPTER 4

### THE CANADIAN HOCKEY ASSOCIATION MERGER AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE AMATEUR SPORT ENTERPRISE

*Is it inadvisable for an organization to be vested with two objectives, each in relatively distinct and different fields, where the organizational structure best suited to achieve one objective may not be the best structure to achieve the other, and where the efforts directed at achieving the one may detract from effectively achieving the other.*

Hockey Canada (1972a: 11)

#### Introduction

Change is an endemic condition in Canadian amateur sport and recent fiscal and social shifts have made the management of change a critical issue for sport leaders (Stevens, 2000; Rail, 2000; Kidd, 1997). In this chapter, an institutional change perspective is adopted in order to examine a particular case of large scale organizational change within the Canadian sport system: the CAHA-HC merger creating the CHA. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the archetypes that characterized the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and Hockey Canada immediately prior to the merger. The merger process is explained through the mechanisms of configurations or archetypes, organizational tracks, and reorientations. The analysis will expand current understandings of particular track characteristics, including the sequence of de-coupling, the pace of change, and various archetype variations such as an embryonic archetype (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988) and archetype sedimentation (Cooper et al., 1996).

Ultimately, the discussion will identify and explain the emergence of a new archetype, the Amateur Sport Enterprise (ASE) within the Canadian hockey system, and discuss its relevance to the larger Canadian amateur sport context.

Previous configurational research on organizational change examined a number of institutional sectors, such as municipal government (Greenwood and Hinings, 1993; Hinings and Greenwood, 1988; Greenwood and Hinings, 1988), accounting firms (Greenwood, Hinings and Brown, 1990; Greenwood, Hinings and Brown, 1994; Cooper et al., 1996), and professional sport franchises (Cousens, 1997). Collectively, this literature extends our understanding of organizational change by identifying institutionally specific archetypes and examining the dynamic elements impacting a transformation. Research across diverse contexts is conducive to theory elaboration because, as Cooper et al. (1996) state, "the dynamics of the emergence of new forms is a field of endeavour relevant to all aspects of organizational studies" (p. 45). This study offers another empirical exploration to be accommodated into the expanding collection of institutional change research.

The archetype framework is also an accepted analytical tool to explain change within the Canadian amateur sport system (Kikulis et al., 1995a, 1995b; Kikulis et al., 1992; Slack and Hinings, 1994; Hinings et al., 1996; Amis, 1998). The literature presents valuable insights into the nature of organizational development among Canadian national sport organizations (NSOs) and complements the business sector research mentioned above. This study supplements this collection of research because it provides a detailed and contemporary case analysis on change within a Canadian NSO. In particular, it furthers our understanding of organizational change within the Canadian NSO population

and within a theoretical perspective that incorporates an institutional theory of change.

### **The Configurational Approach and the Notion of Archetypes**

The notion of archetypes originally emerged from discussions in organization theory that supported an holistic as opposed to a particularistic approach. Mintzberg (1979) built upon early work that emphasized structural components of organizations to present different typologies. Miller and Friesen (1980a, 1980b, 1984) developed an holistic perspective that included both organizational and environmental properties, termed "gestalts". They proposed that there are a limited number of patterns to which organizations gravitate. They believed that, due to a migration towards coherence, it is possible to identify particular "archetypes" within a population and change can be understood according to the transition of an organization from one archetype design to another. Ranson et al. (1980) expanded the notion of archetype as not simply an organization comprised of structural elements, but rather, as an entity that embraced a distinctive interpretive scheme of the values and ideas that underlie an organization. From this perspective, "structures and systems are not neutral instruments but embody intentions, aspirations and purposes" (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988: p 14). In this way, archetypes are defined as "clusters of prescribed and emergent structures and systems given order or coherence by an underpinning set of ideas, values and beliefs, i.e. an interpretive scheme" (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988: 22). In fact, it is the interpretive scheme, with its powerful ideological foundation, that supports the argument for the

institutional specificity of archetypes. For the purpose of this discussion, archetypes are viewed simply as tightly coupled value-structure designs. Here, core values and practices come to be tightly coupled with organizational structures to create a stable and coherent configuration.

A discussion of change involving archetypes also offers the opportunity to extend two interesting areas of inquiry. First, it highlights a concern with "establishing the incidence, nature and causes of movements between design archetypes" (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988: 24). Thus, it examines a scale of transformation that can be considered as quantum change (Miller and Friesen (1980b), revolutionary change (Tushman and Romanelli, 1985), radical change (Greenwood and Hinings, 1988), or frame-bending change (Nadler and Tushman, 1989). Second, archetypes offer reference points from which to track change. As Hinings and Greenwood (1988) suggested, "... the identification of design archetypes is an interesting and illuminating, but essentially *preparatory* step for the explanation and mapping of change" (italics in the original) (p.24). In other words, archetypes provide a framework in which to further explore the theoretical and empirical characteristics of an organizational change process.

This analysis builds upon components explored in archetype discussions by Kikulis et al. (1992) and Greenwood et al. (1990). Other elements have been included in order to highlight the particular characteristics of this case, namely the powerful cultural and biographical nature (Kimberly, 1987) of both the CAHA and Hockey Canada. Based upon their belief that archetypes are founded upon strong interpretive schemes, Hinings and Greenwood (1988) and Kikulis et al. (1992) incorporated organizational values in their template of design components. *Orientation* indicates the sources of legitimation an

organization seeks and is closely connected to sources of funding. Hinings et al. (1996) identified value-systems as a critical area of change within Canadian NSOs and, therefore, *foundation* and *focus* are included as sub-categories in order to illustrate the traditional principles underlying each organization. *Domain* reflects the area of operation that an organization emphasizes and includes specific explanations of both the *scope* of organizational operations and the target *client*.

In addition to institutional values, archetypes also include organizational systems and structures. One critical design element identified by Kikulis et al. (1992) and Hinings et al. (1996) involved principles of organizing. This element explained the methods used to organize and order activities within an association. In the case of Canadian NSOs, this involves relations between volunteer-governance and professional-management aspects of the association. Therefore, *governance* is an important component of NSO design and will be included in this analysis. In addition, there is growing support for the corporate structuring of NSOs (Harvey, Thibault and Rail, 1995; Kikulis et al., 1995b). Thus, the increase in scale and corporate modeling of Canadian NSOs makes it worthwhile to consider *control* and *decision-making* as important design elements within this case.

Hill (1988) presented three control dimensions, strategic, market-financial and operational, and suggested that organizational control can be based upon a combination of these three elements. Greenwood et al. (1990) utilized these dimensions to construct a theoretical framework to analyze the corporate strategic processes in large professional partnerships. Strategic control focuses upon the "extent to which a corporate centre defines for its principal business units the range and scope of marketing initiatives within a framework of corporate goals .." (Greenwood et al. 1990; 727). On the other hand,



market-financial control emphasizes clear financial targets for business units. Finally, operating control is explained by Hill (1988) as the extent to which a corporate centre is involved in basic business unit functions. Thus, these three dimensions offer an opportunity to explore the orientation of controls in different organizational settings, such as the CAHA, Hockey Canada, and the new CHA.

A third design component is organizational structure. Kikulis et al. (1992) explained structure according to elements such as specialization, standardization and centralization. These three structural elements are strongly linked to the principles of organizing, and reflect aspects of organizational complexity and differentiation. The discussion of organizational control extends earlier work by Hill (1988) who sought to explain the relation between the corporate centre and business units within an organization. He suggested that "greater size, diversification and internationalization, however, brings with it complexity which necessitates the introduction of more sophisticated control systems" (Hill, 1988: 414). Canadian amateur sport organizations have moved from "kitchen table" to "executive office" designs (Kikulis et al. 1992) and, as a result, these associations have experienced an increase in size accompanied by greater differentiation. Based upon this increase in scale, the structural elements included in this analysis are *differentiation* and *integration*. As change occurs, the reconfiguration of functional units within an organization presents challenges associated with these two areas. In particular, large scale change involving a merger will not only increase size, and therefore create greater differentiation, but also present challenges associated with the integration of human resources (Albers-Morhman, Ledford, and Morhman, 1989; Buono and Bowditch, 1989).

In addition to the detailed research surrounding these design elements, previous work has emphasized specific areas of change within Canadian NSOs, including strategic orientation (Stevens, 2000; Thibault et al., 1993), value systems (Hinings et al., 1996), and decision-making approaches (Kikulis et al., 1995a). Just as organizational structure is related to principles of organizing, these elements are connected to other value-based elements such as orientation, domain, and foundation characteristics. Although some inferences can be drawn between organizational values and structure, and strategic and decision-making qualities, it is prudent to provide a specific explanation of these areas when developing a more detailed account of change. Given their important role in organizational revitalization (Kimberly and Bouchikhi, 1995; Kimberly and Quinn, 1984), values, systems, and structure are highlighted as the main components to describe the design configurations in this study. In this way, a thorough and consistent explanation of the nature of each archetype can be attempted.

### **Describing the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and Hockey Canada Archetypes**

#### *Canadian Amateur Hockey Association Characteristics*

The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA) reflected a *Sport Provider* archetype (see Table 4:1). The association focused upon the community-level and emphasized the development and regulatory elements needed to organize the game. Its

Table 4:1: The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and  
Hockey Canada Archetypes

| Archetype<br>Components | ARCHETYPE A                            | ARCHETYPE B                          |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Organization            | Canadian Amateur Hockey<br>Association | Hockey Canada                        |
| Archetype Name          | Sport Provider                         | Sport Marketer                       |
| <b>Values</b>           |                                        |                                      |
| Orientation             | Community Association                  | Commercial Agency                    |
| Foundation              | Mission Based                          | Market Based                         |
| Focus                   | Service                                | Profit Maximization                  |
| Domain                  | Grass Roots Network                    | Men's National Team                  |
| Scope                   | Broad                                  | Narrow                               |
| Client                  | Members/Participants                   | Sponsors/Consumers                   |
| <b>Systems</b>          |                                        |                                      |
| Governance              | Volunteer Board Management             | Corporate Board Guidance             |
| Control                 | Operational and Strategic              | Marketing/Financial and<br>Strategic |
| Decision Making         | Consensus-based                        | Individual and Directive             |
| <b>Structure</b>        |                                        |                                      |
| Differentiation         | Tall structure                         | Flat structure                       |
| Integration             | Indirect and complex                   | Direct and simple                    |

mission was founded upon a powerful commitment to community level hockey and a responsibility to assist and expand hockey opportunities in all regions of the country. The CAHA clearly viewed its clients to be its membership, both individuals registered in local hockey associations and its provincial branches, and directed all programs towards these stakeholders. Therefore, it was a non-profit service organization which assumed a very broad and diverse scope – the cultivation and maintenance of an expansive grassroots hockey network. As a former CAHA staff member stated, “we were a service organization to our branches first and foremost”. A CHA volunteer from the CAHA commented on the values of the *Sport Provider* archetype in the following comment: “The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association brought a membership base and a service approach”. This position was also emphasized by the following two comments:

I think the culture was really the grass roots focus and the importance of delivering that programming to the members – and even a concern about being league driven - whether it be internationally or at the highest levels of the domestic game - people wanted to focus in on the domestic programs (CHA Executive Committee Volunteer).

The branches were the CAHA .... it was very volunteer based, very hypersensitive to the needs of the volunteers and we used to spend hours agonizing over how we can make it better (CHA Staff Member from the CAHA).

The governance structure included provincial, regional, national and international levels. The CAHA involved a 35-member volunteer Board of Directors and, at its peak, included approximately 30 staff members. The management of the association involved an intricate collaboration between grassroots volunteers and professional staff and illustrated strong links between

governance and operational activities. Overall, decision-making was consensus-based (Pettigrew, 1973). This inclusive community-oriented position is described in the following quotation:

The Canadian Hockey Association was a group of provinces who wanted to come together so that there would be a national group -- so that when province competed against province we would have standard rules, standard regulations, standard operations. In addition to that we wanted to develop a Canadian game. We did all of that with a volunteer base and a staff that was hired to work with the volunteers. When you hire a staff to work with volunteers, do you then give the authority to simply go out, spend money, do things in order to make the operation work? The answer is no. You now operate with a board of directors, you spend a lot of time in meetings and discussions - a lot of people outside of democratic organizations say it's wasteful and perhaps one of the weaknesses is that we spend more time, at times, talking than we do acting. But that was the culture of the organization (CHA Board Member from the CAHA).

The CAHA originally developed domestic areas such as regulations and events. However, as the association grew, its expanded into development programs such as coaching, officiating and training, as well as some international responsibilities. An upper-level CHA staff member described the organization and its operational expansion as follows:

I think when you look at the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association it was the governing body for hockey in the country and dealt mainly with the grassroots side of the game. I think when the Program of Excellence [high performance] was introduced in 1981 it showed that the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association was going to get more involved with the high performance side.

Operational control was an important organizational system within the CAHA due



to the close connections between staff and volunteer roles. The Board of Directors had an active management role in the organization that was reinforced both through the formal structure and in the informal relations between staff and volunteers. Financial operations, in particular, were closely monitored. Financial guidelines were important within the operational focus between the central Board and the various staff units, and expenditures were closely scrutinized since the Board took its governance responsibility very seriously. The financial responsibility of CAHA operations created some dilemmas when there was a high demand for operating funds. Although the association needed program funding, the leadership was wary of drawing larger fees from the membership base. It also rarely took an entrepreneurial approach to raising funds. This resistance to increasing the financial burden on members was recognized by one participant who stated:

The amount of money that the membership pays into the association is a pittance compared to the total budget of this association. And they are not prepared to pay anymore. Every time you ask for another nickel, it is like drawing teeth from a hen (CHA Executive Committee Volunteer).

Thus, the CAHA remained committed to simply providing affordable high-quality hockey services to Canadians.

Some participants recognized the CAHA's fiscal conservatism as a mentality that prevented it from taking advantage of large revenue-generating opportunities, such as international hockey events, but also protected it from potential financial losses that could emerge from such ventures. As a CHA staff member commented, "the old Canadian Amateur Hockey Association was not very motivated or prepared or financially capable of moving into those areas with some real impact". In fact, many former CAHA staff and

volunteers made specific reference to the fact that the underlying ideal of fiscal control was a force that directed the CAHA to allow HC to operate international hockey activities. In other words, they believed that the CAHA let HC manage the national team because of the associated large costs and unpredictable revenues of the program. This position was supported by the following comments:

We weren't prepared to take on the financial risk that went with the event. In that respect we were quite happy to have them [HC] out there doing that. We didn't take on any of the financial risk but, of course, on the other hand we never shared in any of the financial gain either. We certainly could have done as good a job, but it was never an issue. The membership was so frightened of taking on any additional financial responsibility that they really shied away from any risk whatsoever (CHA Staff from CAHA).

Another interviewee stated:

But we are all also very cautious about spending our money and taking financial risk. I don't think they realized that by not being prepared - by not taking the financial risk-that they were also giving up some opportunities (CHA Board Member from CAHA).

The CAHA was not entrepreneurial because of its financial caution and non-profit foundation. However, this position also meant the CAHA effectively focused all resources on its primary domain - the grassroots hockey network.

Although there had been an increase in the number of professionals working within the organization between 1970, the point at which government funding to national sport organizations increased, and 1994, the year of the merger, a level of cultural stability had been reached in terms of volunteer-staff relations within the association. Therefore, strategic control also played a dominant role within the association. For example, by the early 1990s, the CAHA had developed a very inclusive and collaborative

strategic planning process where decision-making was driven according to a strong philosophy of representation, or what many participants referred to as "decision-making by committee". However, the large size of the association coupled with the multi-level decision-making and operational configuration made organizational integration indirect and complex. Therefore, action and decision-making within the tall structure was time consuming and relied heavily upon a culture of respect and trust among staff and volunteer groups.

#### *Hockey Canada Characteristics*

Hockey Canada (HC) reflected a *Sport-Marketer* archetype that emphatically adopted a commercial orientation (see Table 4:1). The agency was formed by the federal government in 1969 and given the mandate to manage and operate the Canadian men's national hockey team. Given its very narrow and focused scope, HC pursued marketable opportunities that enabled it to generate the funds necessary to manage a successful business.

The principles of organizing emphasized a corporate-business model. This point regarding the agency's organizational approach emerged as follows:

It was a corporate organization. So who would have been its companion, who would have been those to whom it would model itself after? Where would it have gotten its own direction? It would have been professional hockey clubs. You're really operating a professional hockey club which is not in a league, but it's going to play in a world league representing Canada. So therefore - you set up your budgeting, you set up your approach, you set up the way you form your team, based upon that

corporate structure. That corporate structure doesn't lend itself to a lot of discussion, a lot of debate, a lot of looking at what are the options. It's not the culture of any of those organizations. Organizations in the private sector operate as they should - by putting one person in charge. That person is then given an incredible amount of autonomy to go and make money (CHA Executive Committee Volunteer).

In fact, very early in its history, the agency developed strong corporate and political affiliations. Hence, the governance structure involved an appointed corporate Board that met, at best, two or three times a year and provided guidance to the staff. It functioned similarly to many corporate boards, in that a Chief Officer and Executive staff were responsible for operating the agency and the Board's role was to review financial and programming issues on an annual and semi-annual basis. HC was a very small agency that involved approximately 15 to 20 staff members at its peak, including the national men's team coaching staff. A CHA staff member stated: "Hockey Canada was based more upon the corporate model of governance. A small board, bottom-line finances - and everything else would answer to that end". A former HC volunteer explained Hockey Canada's foundation by stating: "You couldn't run a program of the degree of responsibility and exposure which Hockey Canada had - World Championships, Olympics, National Team - without proper staff and a proper business office".

Overall, HC involved a low degree of differentiation and reflected a flat structure.

Due to its small size, integration within the association was direct and simple.

Operational control was very low since the staff were responsible for meeting annual targets set either by the executive manager or the corporate board. In fact, there was a high level of flexibility regarding accountability over process, which later became an important issue when certain Hockey Canada Board members were charged with fraud

and other financial misappropriations. Nevertheless, the agency had a high level of market control and a medium level of strategic control. The corporate Board set general guidelines and staff functioned independently to manage and expand their particular responsibilities.

Decision-making, a system that is strongly connected to the underlying values of an organization, was de-centralized and individualized. The flat structure afforded the Executive Director a great deal of power and staff experienced a relative amount of autonomy to carry out operational responsibilities. Within the agency, the decision-making process was driven according to the purpose of the work. A CHA staff member from HC remarked on the central role of managers within Hockey Canada decision-making as follows:

The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association was a dialogue ... but Hockey Canada was about monologue. The mentality with a group like Hockey Canada is very much – we make our decisions around the card table – we sit down with the people who give us the bucks – we decide how to distribute the bucks.

Hence, decision-making was clearly delineated between operations and governance. In fact, many accounts of Hockey Canada's governance structure situated the Board as an advisory body. This is also portrayed in the next comment:

The Hockey Canada tradition was to expect the staff to come up with initiatives and suggestions and bring them to the Board. We'll approve or modify or not approve and so on – but we expect staff to be the nerve centre of the organization (Former Hockey Canada Volunteer).

Hockey Canada's primary clients were sponsors and potential consumers of its various event properties. These clients were critical to the success of the "one program"



mandate of HC and, as such, the agency adopted an aggressive growth-external strategy to extend its place within the national and international hockey markets. The scope of Hockey Canada's domain was driven strongly by economics. A CHA staff member explained this focus as follows:

They had the demand of expenses against the team and whether or not they wanted to come into a community and play a game was secondary to the fact of whether or not they could afford to come into a community.

In order to maximize profits, Hockey Canada aggressively created and marketed various properties and therefore, this archetype emphasizes a proliferation of hockey commodities.

Initially, HC focused upon events as a means to pursue the national team mandate. The agency created the 1972 Canada-Russia Summit Series, the 1974 Challenge Cup, the Canada Cup tournaments, and various other NHL-Russia exhibitions. By the 1990s, the agency supplemented these profitable ventures with some development products. As HC grew, some Board members believed the agency's role should include domestic activities and expanded the mandate of the organization to include various development initiatives, such as an in-house video office, coaching manuals and instructional films, international seminars and conferences, and regional resource centres. The agency's structure differentiated these two operational areas as noted in the following quotation from an early HC position paper:

It has become evident to the management and staff of Hockey Canada that increasing support is being expressed ..... to the development of the quality of Canadian hockey, not so much in terms of winning the game or of providing a handsome financial return to sponsors or owners, but more in terms of developing the fundamentals of the game .. (Hockey Canada, 1972a, 12).

To a smaller extent, Hockey Canada exhibited some internal contradictions in philosophy. On the one hand, corporate values dominated and continued to emphasize the national team as a property that offered tremendous profit-making opportunities. However, a smaller group within the Board of Directors valued the need to create development programs, which offered system-wide benefits to hockey in Canada. Various former HC Board members noted how these philosophies were differentiated between Hockey Canada members based in Toronto and those based in Calgary. One active member of the marketing group was Alan Eagleson, whose approach was described by a former HC member as "really individualistic and dictatorial". Various staff and volunteers from both HC and the CAHA referred to the distinction between development and business within HC as reflections of the "east" versus "west" groups who served on the Board. For example, one CHA Board Member commented that:

It seemed to me the driving force from Hockey Canada's point of view was the western wing of Hockey Canada - the group that worked out of the Calgary Center of Excellence.... I think that they were less interested in the team side than they were in the total development of the game. I think they saw an opportunity to play a leading role in gaining funding that would develop the grassroots levels of the game.

Despite these minor efforts to enhance the humanistic aspects of the game, HC's orientation was entrenched within the business sector where it served sponsors and marketed properties. The "eastern" group dominated and the HC "marketeers" emphasized profit-making activities.

These two archetypes outline the nature of both the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and Hockey Canada prior to the merger that ultimately led to the formation of the Canadian Hockey Association. Overall, participants differentiated these two

organizations accordingly to opposing characteristics. Specifically, respondents mentioned terms such as "dialogue", "open board", "service" and "broad" to describe the CAHA while they utilized terms such as "monologue", "back room", "business" and "narrow" to explain the nature of Hockey Canada. The *Sport Provider* archetype illustrates characteristics similar to two designs identified by Kikulis et al. (1992). First, the executive office archetype includes professional and technical expertise, and a degree of formal planning, both of which are evident in the CAHA design. Second, the *Sport Provider* design displays strong volunteer-based values and decision-making forums that are more characteristic of the boardroom archetype. On the other hand, the *Sport Marketer* archetype incorporates characteristics similar to the professional sport business-centred archetype identified by Cousens (1997). It focuses upon revenue-generation, emphasizes profit-maximization, and is market-based as opposed to mission-driven. The CAHA and Hockey Canada configurations present contemporary yet contradictory designs of national-level sport organizations in Canada. By understanding where each organization began, it is possible to explain the type and sequence of changes within the new CHA.

### **Identifying the Canadian Hockey Association Merger Track**

#### *The Configuration and Organizational Track Frameworks*

Hinings and Greenwood (1988) believe that by defining an organization's design

in terms of underpinning interpretive schemes of the archetype it is possible to understand the transition from one archetype to another as a fundamental change in organizational values. In other words, they recognize that radical change is not an easy process because it involves more than simple structural modifications. However, an organizational track is an effective means to understanding the dynamics of strategic change since it explains and maps the process of change. Tracks outline the path taken by an organization as it moves from one coherent design, through various non-coherent stages, to a new coherent design. Therefore, archetypes and organizational tracks offer heuristic devices for identifying particular transitions and examining their emergence and process.

Miller and Friesen (1980a) define a transition as "a package of changes that occur between the onset of the imbalance or stress and time when equilibrium or tranquil interval is reached" (p. 271). Clearly, a time dimension is an important consideration in understanding the dynamics of change. This account utilizes the *Sport Provider* and *Sport Marketer* archetypes as benchmarks from which to track the CHA merger. The identification of transition periods along the CHA merger track was based upon two particular rationales. First, the reasoning offered by Miller and Friesen (1980a) was very useful in defining the particular moments or packages of organizational configurations during the change process. They recognize shifts in design according to organizational value or interpretive scheme characteristics. This is consistent with previous researchers who identified these elements as deep-seated organizational components and, therefore, believed they are appropriate indicators of radical change (Ranson et al., 1980; Hinings et al., 1996; Meyer, Tsui and Hinings, 1993). In addition to the value-based signals, a transition period can also be identified by major trigger or impact events. The notion of

archetypes suggests a level of design coherence that facilitates stability. However, trigger events can stimulate change by shifting or destabilizing an organizational configuration (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988).

Generally, events can impact the belief system or the structural elements that exist within an organization. Miller and Friesen (1980a; 1980b) identified several types of events that can initiate an archetype transformation. For example, the decision to build a major new facility, the modification of organizational structure and the distribution of authority, or the addition of new departments each reflect structural triggers. Interpretive impacts include a change in administrative practices, the introduction of a new marketing strategy, and the replacement of a top executive, each of which offers interpretive dynamics.

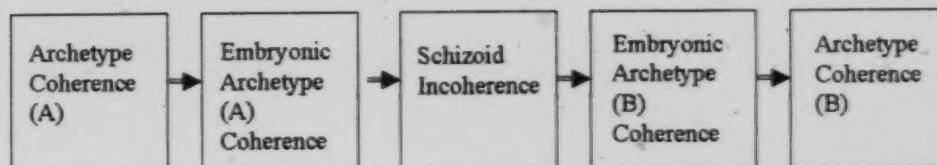
In developing an organizational track, Hinings and Greenwood (1988) explained three general archetype positions that emerge during an organizational transformation. "Archetype coherence" is a position where the structures and processes of an organizational design consistently reflect and reinforce one interpretive scheme. That is, the archetype reflects a coherent configuration. The second position, termed an "embryonic archetype coherence", illustrates a condition where the structures and processes of an organization nearly reflect the ideas and values of a consistent interpretive scheme. In this position significant design elements are discordant. Finally, "schizoid incoherence" includes structures and processes where tension exists between two contradictory sets of ideas and values. These variations emerge during the de-coupling and re-coupling process that drives revolutionary change.

An organizational track is comprised of variations of these three configurations.



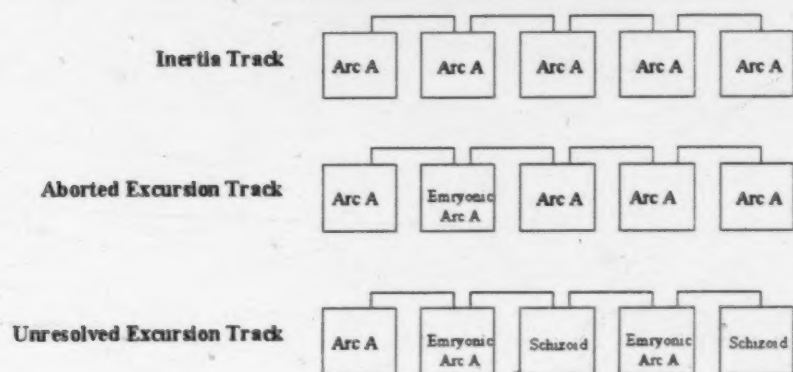
A generic track illustrates an ideal progression from one archetype into a completely different design (see Figure 4:1). The path shows that an organization begins a transformation when the current archetype, labelled as "archetype A", becomes discordant. This change is reflected by "embryonic A" and continues to a position where tensions between the "old and new" value-structure design arise. This discontinuity between a residual archetype and an emerging coherence is shown as "schizoid incoherence". From this position, an organization moves into a new embryonic position, labelled as "embryonic B", where the new characteristics of an archetype design begin to emerge. Finally, the organization reaches a new design coherence, shown as "archetype B". In other words, this generic track illustrates the de-institutionalization of one archetype and the re-institutionalization of another.

Greenwood and Hinings (1988) described an organizational track as the temporal relationships between an organization and one or more archetypes. A track is marked by the configuration of structural de-coupling and re-coupling to an alternative interpretive scheme. Recognizing that not all organizations will change according to such a clear and successful progression, Hinings and Greenwood (1988) suggested four variations to the ideal track (Figure 4:2). First, the "inertia" track illustrates how organizations gravitate towards a particular design archetype and remain there for lengthy periods of time. In this case, an organization has attached to one interpretive scheme and although incremental changes may occur, it remains in this stable position. The second track, called an "aborted excursion", involves limited adjustments to the existing archetype. The

**Figure 4:1****Generic Track: Archetype Decoupling and Recoupling**

(Hinings and Greenwood, 1988)

**Figure 4:2 - Configurations (tracks) of Interpretive Decoupling and Recoupling**

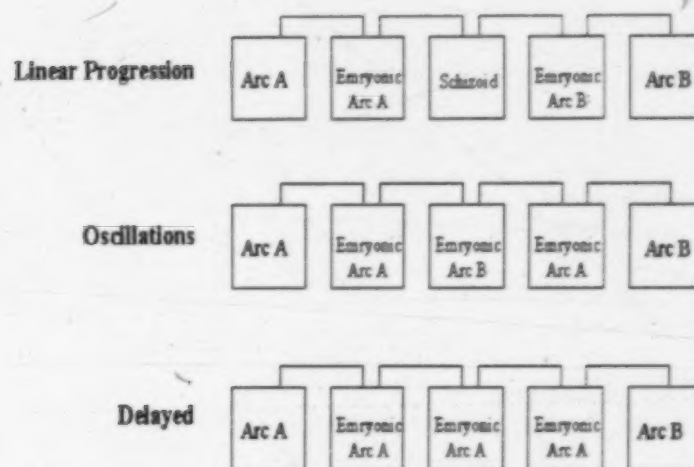


(Hinings and Greenwood, 1988)

organization enters a stage of design incoherence but this is followed by archetype retention. In other words, certain structural aspects become de-coupled from the prevailing interpretive scheme. However, due to factors like declining performance or experimentation, the movement away from the starting archetype is reversed and a subsequent retention of the original design is achieved.

Understanding the dynamics of failed change is just as critical as examining successful change; therefore, "the study of organizational tracks, ... has to encompass aborted and unresolved excursions in order that the play of determinant factors may be understood" (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988, 35). An "unresolved excursion" is the third track and illustrates a situation where an existing archetype design begins to de-couple. However, its transition to a new design is incomplete and the organization remains in a state of incoherence. Unlike the previous track outlines, which assume a gravitational pull towards structural and processual coherence, the "unresolved excursion" reveals how organizations may become suspended between the gravitational pulls of competing interpretive schemes (Ranson et al., 1980).

The final track is called "reorientation" and describes a transformation where an organization leaves one archetype and assumes a new design coherence (Figure 4:3). Here, prevailing ideas lose legitimacy and a new interpretive scheme, coupled with new structural elements, is established. Very few radical transformations involve a clear linear progression and, therefore, Hinings and Greenwood (1988) presented three reorientation variations involving temporary reversals or "oscillations", and extended periods of stasis, or "delays".

**Figure 4:3 - Reorientations (transformations)**

(Hinings and Greenwood, 1988)



The first type of reorientation is a "linear progression" track that follows a linear path. In this pattern, an organization moves through a stage where the archetype design begins to de-couple and enters a period of disarray. This is followed by a stage where a new archetype begins to emerge and is completed when a new value-structure configuration is generated. A second reorientation, called "oscillation", involves the same stages, but the transition does not follow a simple and uninterrupted path. The organization experiences temporary reversals between particular stages along the track before ultimately achieving a new configuration. Finally, the "delayed" reorientation illustrates an organization that may remain in a particular stage for varying lengths of time, but ultimately completes the transformation to a new archetype. Each of these tracks shows different sequences, which ultimately illustrate a successful reorientation.

*The Canadian Hockey Association Merger: an analysis of the reorientation*

Archetypes are structures in process and, therefore, to trace how organizations change one must recognize that they take a variety of tracks throughout their lifespan (Cooper et al., 1996). In this way, tracks illustrate an historical process that not only explains what has happened and what is happening, but must also keep in mind what is yet to happen. Thus, the track described in this section is in no way complete, but in a constant state of flux and fixture. Having said this, the research findings most appropriately reflect a CHA merger "reorientation" track involving oscillations and delays. In addition, there is evidence supporting different archetype configurations than

those outlined by Hinings and Greenwood (1988).

Before a discussion of the specific track is offered, the rationale for the exclusion of the other archetype de-coupling and re-coupling patterns must be given. The CHA does not follow an "inertia track" since neither organization resisted the change or remained stable during the process. An agreement, signed by representatives of each organization, legally dissolved the CAHA and Hockey Canada and created a new formal entity. Hence, there is no inertia since the two organizations moved into a condition of instability. As well, the merger does not represent an "aborted excursion" since there is no archetype retention or retreat. The two associations did not begin to merge and then call off the arrangement to return, as before, to two separate entities. Thus, this case may reflect either an "unresolved excursion" or a "reorientation".

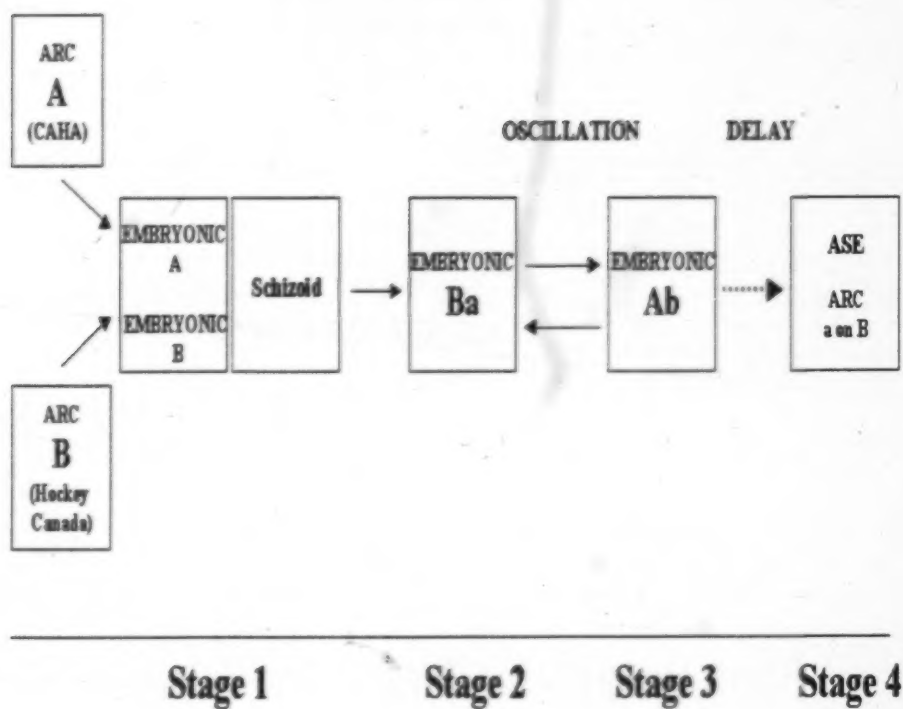
Drawing from rationales provided by Hinings and Greenwood (1988), Kikulis et al. (1992) and Cooper et al. (1996), it can be argued that this case does not reflect an "unresolved excursion". According to various merger studies, the average amalgamation takes five to seven years to complete (Buono and Bowditch, 1989; McCann and Gilkey, 1988; Shrivastava, 1986). Six years have passed since the formal merger occurred and, therefore, it can be argued that the time period for radical change is sufficient. Second, it is clear that the CHA displays a "stability of attachment" (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988: 103) to a particular configuration. The new design is, in fact, a different configuration than those explained by Kikulis et al. (1992) and presents a more contemporary archetype for the Canadian NSO institutional sector. Finally, Cooper et al. (1996) raised the notion of sedimentation as a type of re-orientation, where sedimentation, or the layering of structures upon values, is a coherent organizational condition. Although they situated this

variation as a type of "unresolved excursion", it can be argued that sedimentation presents a new archetype within an institutional sector. Consequently, the case will be explained as an example of a reorientation involving various delays and oscillations that resulted in archetype sedimentation.

The CHA merger began with the integration of two separate organizations to create an *embryonic A-embryonic B* variation (see Figure 4:4). Here, the CHA reflected a dual embryonic coherence where elements of both the CAHA and Hockey Canada were present within the new organization. Thus, the new association was not completely like the CAHA (Archetype A), nor was it completely like HC (Archetype B). The configuration consisted of structural and interpretive remnants of each. However, during this first stage of reorientation the CHA quickly moved into a *schizoid incoherence* position. This configuration reflected an unstable and confused context within the CHA. The uncertainty was driven by tension between the contradictory interpretive schemes, structures, strategies, and decision-making approaches of the *Sport Provider* and *Sport Marketer* archetypes.

An *embryonic Ba coherence* emerged in stage two of the merger process. This configuration is designated "Ba" since the structures and processes of the CHA nearly reflect the ideas and values of an interpretive scheme similar to the former Hockey Canada (Archetype B). This was followed by an *embryonic Ab coherence* in stage three. The "Ab" designation illustrates that the structures and processes within the CHA shifted towards *nearly* reflecting the values and interpretive scheme of the former CAHA various

**Figure 4:4 - Canadian Hockey Association  
Merger Reorientation**



trigger events influenced the organization. Finally, the track moved to stage four where a (Archetype A). The reorientation experienced oscillations between these two stages as design, termed *a on B coherence*, arose. Here, a new archetype, the Amateur Sport Enterprise, emerged where the structural remnants of the CAHA configuration were nested on the interpretive framework of the HC design. The following sections outline the characteristics of each variation along the track, identify key trigger events, and explain the nature of the Amateur Sport Enterprise archetype.

*The Sequence of Change in the CHA Merger – an analysis of the organizational track*

This analysis focuses upon an insular view of the CHA merger. It emphasizes a micro-level perspective of the CHA as it underwent a major transformation. The period examined in this study began in May 1994 and ended in May 2000, representing what Greenwood et al.(1994) term the “consummation stage” of a merger. This is not to say that the macro-level, or external dynamics influencing this case are not relevant. Indeed, these have been explained in detail in chapter three and addressed in this discussion in terms of trigger events influencing the change process. However, in order to probe and elaborate understanding of organizational tracks and the nature of archetype transformation, results from this detailed qualitative case analysis will be presented in this chapter as well as chapter five.

The sequence of change addresses the process by which elements of an organization transform while the organization moves from one coherent design to

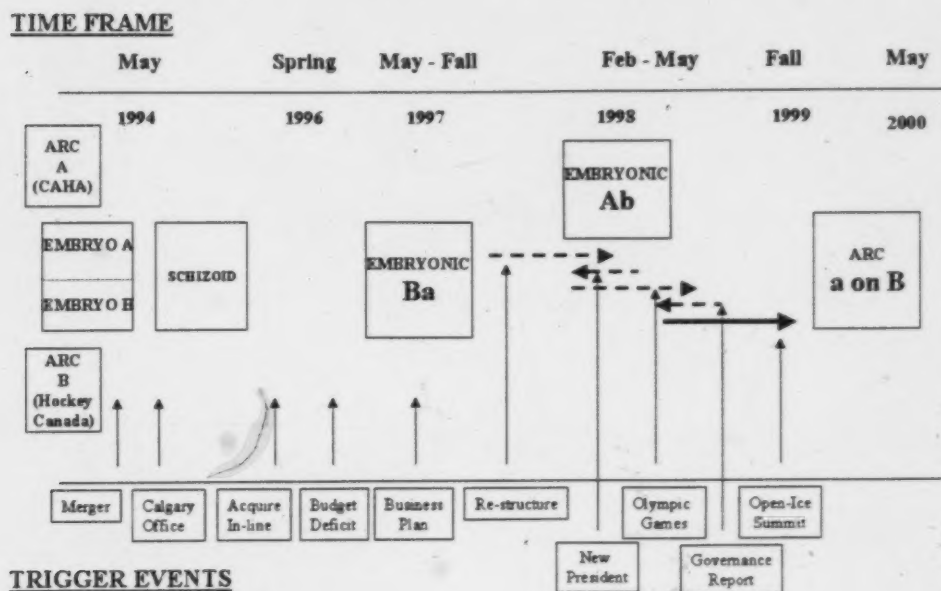


another. The sequence of change within the CHA will be explored based upon three main conceptual elements. First, the interplay of structure and action forces within the organization will be identified. These two elements are highlighted as critical dynamics in studies that seek to provide holistic explanations of change (Stevens and Slack, 1998; Greenwood, Hinings, Cooper and Brown 1996). In this case, the structure dynamic is reflected in the structural characteristics of the *Sport Provider* archetype, or CAHA, and the action dynamic is represented by the interpretive characteristics of the *Sport Marketer* archetype, or Hockey Canada.

Second, the influence of the structure and action forces will be explored according to Hinings and Greenwood's (1988) general sequences for archetype de-coupling. These sequences may be structure-driven or interpretive-driven. There exists a similar analytical frame between these two de-coupling mechanisms as well as the structure and action forces that may initiate organizational change within the CHA. Therefore, structure-driven and interpretive-driven change may be initiated by factors arising from either *archetype A* (CAHA) or *archetype B* (HC) characteristics. Finally, the four stages identified in the CHA, which reflect merger shifts between action and structure driven de-coupling, will be explained according to trigger events that impacted the CHA.

The amalgamation of Hockey Canada and the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association involved a weak, but prescribed, organizational template, where the operational and governance elements from each organization were combined. This is presented as the *embryonic A-embryonic B* variation in Figure 4:5. The discussion of

**Figure 4:5 - Canadian Hockey Association Merger Track**



organizational control extends earlier work by Hill (1988) who sought to explain the relation between the corporate centre and business units within an organization. He suggested that "greater size, diversification and internationalization, however, brings with it complexity which necessitates the introduction of more sophisticated control systems" (Hill, 1988: 414). Canadian amateur sport organizations have moved from "kitchen table" to "executive office" designs (Kikulis et al. 1992) and, as a result, these associations have experienced an increase in size accompanied by greater diversification. The CAHA was the larger and older organization and, therefore, it assumed the stronger contextual characteristics within the new association. The CAHA provided the general foundation upon which the CHA was structured. On the other hand, the younger and significantly smaller Hockey Canada was inserted into this structural framework. The CHA governance structure included the existing CAHA Board of Directors plus three members of the Hockey Canada Board. However, these positions were only for a three-year probationary term after which point the former Hockey Canada volunteers needed to run in a general election if they wanted to remain on the Board (CHA, 1994).

In addition to governance integration, the CHA merger plan included the retention of all staff from each parent organization into the new CHA. Again, the smaller HC group was simply inserted into the larger CAHA structure. It was added as a separate business operations unit within the more expansive CAHA organizational chart. As one CHA Manager stated, "as much as it looked like a merger, we accommodated them into our existing structure". Thus, it was clear at the outset that the internal CHA context generalized the structural imperatives of the CAHA, or *Sport Provider* and localized the action imperative of HC, or the *Sport Marketer*. The amalgamation began with this

structure-action configuration.

Hinings and Greenwood (1988) believe that an important consideration in understanding organizational change is to analyze the de-coupling of prescribed frameworks and emergent interactions. In other words, it is critical to examine whether emergent interpretive schemes or planned structural alterations drive change. This is a fundamental issue in recent institutional explanations of organizational change (Greenwood et al., 1996; Scott, 1995a; Oliver, 1992). There are three general sequences for de-coupling outlined by Hinings and Greenwood (1988). In a "prescribed-emergent detachment", which is structure-driven, the initial plan for change is inadequate and, as a result, different practices emerge. These new activities arise due to the novelty of the situation or the fact that the prescribed framework is loosely stated and leads to imperfect understanding among the members of the organization. A value-driven "emergent-prescribed detachment" illustrates a sequence where emergent practices become de-coupled from the existing interpretive scheme and operate within a newly prescribed framework. Finally, a "simultaneous detachment" involves structure and value driven elements that act concurrently upon an organization.

The case examined in this study presents an alternating sequence between the prescribed-emergent and the emergent-prescribed types of detachments throughout all stages. In June 1994, the CAHA and HC merged into a new legal entity, known as the Canadian Hockey Association. Stage one began with a prescribed-emergent de-coupling where a specific merger plan, derived by members from each organization, was put in place. However, transitions are typically under-managed particularly when they are radical in nature (Kimberly and Quinn, 1984). In the CHA merger, the data revealed that

it was quickly apparent to both CHA volunteers and staff that the merger was poorly planned and the structural and operational template created to guide the change was overly ambiguous.

Key trigger events moved the CHA from its prescribed *embryonic A-embryonic B* configuration into *schizoid incoherence*. The creation of a new office in Calgary presented several unexpected costs to the association. The construction of the site was behind schedule and some staff members were moved to Calgary before the office was complete. They were placed in temporary office locations at the Calgary Saddledome, a facility for the Calgary National Hockey League franchise, and operated without administrative support. In March 1996, the CHA took over as the national governing body for national in-line hockey (CHA, 1996). This new business unit was added to the CHA structure as "Canadian Hockey In-line" and operations quickly grew to include three staff members and a national team program. However, the acquisition was poorly planned. One participant remarked on the short sightedness of the resources needed to effectively integrate in-line into the CHA as follows:

They thought – here's an opportunity for a cash cow. We can make money from this and it should help everybody across Canada. After the first year, they lose \$100,000. Now everybody's mad. "Why are we in in-line? What was sold to us?" They didn't look at how the system didn't support it. There wasn't any structure put in place or any real plan about where it was going (CHA Manager).

However, the most critical trigger shifting the CHA into a state of *schizoid incoherence* was a deficit budget that was reported to the Board of Directors in May 1996 (CHA, 1996). The report stated that the 1994-95 season, the first year after the merger, ended with a \$700,000 surplus in the CHA's budget. This was due to successful



performance results of the national teams at World Championships, which provided prize money revenues to the association. Unfortunately, this success was short lived and high expenses contributed to a deficit of nearly \$900,000 in 1995-96 (CHA, 1996). For many former CAHA members, particularly volunteers, who had come from an organization of strong fiscal conservatism, the \$1.5 million turnaround was a significant shock. A CHA Board member commented on the fiscal strife by declaring, "We've never had so many financial problems". The CAHA had doubled its operating budget, mainly because of maintaining all staff from both the CAHA and HC, opening a new office and beginning new ventures, such as in-line hockey. A CHA Manager also attributed the financial deficit to an aggressive apparel and resource merchandise line, which was part of the marketing interest of the new business operations unit. The operation carried a massive amount of costly inventory in its Breakaway Store retail sales unit.

Arguments about the cause of the excessive expenditure within the CHA came from nearly every participant. Some participants suggested it was based upon poor financial decision-making. The following statement illustrated this view by explaining the costs associated with maintaining the Ottawa head office:

They turn right around and sign a five to seven year lease agreement that costs two and a half times what it costs to run the [Calgary] national training centre in rent. I mean, it is an unconscionable decision by an unfocused group of people (CHA Board Member).

Other CHA staff attributed financial difficulties to amalgamating the financial and operational systems of each parent organization. One CHA Manager stated: "We merged in 1994 and we have changed our financial statements and our chart of accounts three times since then". In other words, this participant felt the CHA's financial records were

in disarray and, as a result, account statements were constantly revised when in fact, they should have been finalized. Another participant was more specific in pinpointing the costs of particular human resource systems as the cause:

The medical plans, dental plans, salary ranges, policies, dress codes and travel policies were different. We didn't use the same credit card or calling card. Travel forms were different. I know these seem minor but it's the nuts and bolts of an organization (CHA Manager from the former CAHA).

Finally, some CHA staff attributed the fiscal deficit to poor planning and a lack of control over expenditures. The budget exploded due to the merger, as was noted by a participant who stated that "the merger created a necessity for a greater cash flow for the organization". Another participant summarized the high costs associated with poor merger planning as follows:

There is no question that the merger wasn't well planned. There was no cost-benefit analysis of moving staff to the Calgary office. There was never any idea of travel costs associated with the staff and day-to-day activities – a lot of which is based in central Canada. That is where 66% or greater of our membership exist. None of that was ever really taken into account. We went from a budget of roughly \$4 million as the CAHA to a budget of \$8-9 as the merged organization (CHA Manager from the CAHA).

Some CHA staff from the hockey operations unit even suggested that the deficit was due to a business operations unit involving excessive and costly activities compared to other units:

The [marketing] attitude was always – you have to spend money to make money. But we are nonprofit. It is not like we can spend \$10,000 to make \$20,000 if the \$20,000 is not there. We can spend \$10,000 and still not make anything. I think marketing people, in general, have a profit attitude. We aren't a profit company (CHA Manager).

The CHA business operations staff was more accepting of the expense demands related to marketing and sponsorship. One Manager in the marketing department explained the challenges facing the business unit as expected financial turmoil and a reflection of "the volatility of some of the programming that we embarked upon in the merger".

Thus, it is apparent that both the CAHA and HC followed the prescribed merger format until an early sequence of events, including the opening of the Calgary head office, the acquisition of Canadian in-line hockey, and the budget deficit, triggered a re-configuration within the CHA. The amalgamation presented uncharted territory for many volunteers and staff, who underestimated the number of changes and needs that would arise. Goodrick and Salancik (1996) suggest that the effects of voluntary versus deterministic pressures upon organizational change are influenced by the degree of uncertainty. They argue that the less familiar actors are with a situation, the greater discretion will be afforded. Therefore, organizational change will appear more voluntaristic, or action-driven in uncertain conditions.

The sequence of triggers during the early stages of the CHA merger moved the organization into a state of disarray. By the summer of 1997, communication within the organization was limited to a simple bulletin process. Notification of changes and decisions was done through vague, written memos rather than day-to-day meetings, and was sent from upper-management to various middle and low-level managers and administrative staff. In fact, management met on a "problem-driven" basis rather than in regularly scheduled meetings. Operation-governance integration within the organization was weak. Initially, staff had been assigned as liaisons with various volunteer councils and committees, but these responsibilities were non-existent by the summer of 1997.

Thus, linkages between the two key domains within the association were limited to upper-level staff management and executive-level volunteers. Many CHA staff commented that, overall, communication within the organization was minimal and staff had little information regarding upper-management decisions.

The early stages of the merger did not reveal a dominant scheme or structure within the CHA. However, by stage two an "emergent-prescribed detachment" occurred where new actions and practices arose in response to the inability of the existing structure to address effectively the high demands facing members. In other words, the action-characteristics of HC, which reflected very voluntaristic qualities such as autonomy and individual and direct decision-making, emerged as a more powerful decoupling force than the deterministic structural CAHA characteristics. The *embryonic Ba* variation that existed in stage two reflected a design where the interpretive scheme of the association was dominated by Hockey Canada characteristics and the structural configuration reflected CAHA elements. Thus, the large governance component still existed, but the orientation of the CHA focused more upon the commercial nature of the game. Staff operations within marketing, sponsorship, event management, and communications expanded and decision-making assumed a very fast pace associated with sales and corporate dealings. Thus, the governance dimension, with its slower consensus-based decision-making process was excluded from many of the activities that occurred.

A CHA Manager from the CAHA described this initial shift as evidence of a corporate "takeover" because "there was so much authority given to the people from the Hockey Canada organization following the merger". The emergence of the *embryonic Ba* variation was triggered by the development of the CHA business plan. Strategic

management within the CAHA had involved a very de-centralized and collective process, where all members of the organization gave input and were philosophically connected to the underlying spirit of the strategic plan. Within HC, strategic planning was a simple and narrow process, where the senior manager for the agency directed staff in the various areas. Although staff members had a level of autonomy to develop and manage projects specific to their areas, the activities were market-driven and task-oriented.

From 1994 until 1996, the CHA functioned without a strategic plan. For 1996-97, one executive volunteer and one staff member coordinated the development of a business plan. Each participant commented that despite requests from managers to provide business plan guidelines and targets, very few responses were received. In addition, they believed the removal of staff liaisons from volunteer councils made business plan input from the governance side very difficult. Therefore, the development of the plan was a closed process and the terminology, "business" as opposed to "strategic", implied a market-based rationale as the focus of the CHA.

It is evident that each trigger event, such as the business plan, the budget deficit, the acquisition of in-line hockey, and the opening of the Calgary head office, created momentum towards an emergent commercial force within the CHA. New business practices emphasized sponsorship and marketing operations and were viewed as immediate solutions to the lack of revenue in the association. The business plan represented interpretive reinforcement to the business orientation. Hence, an "emergent-prescribed detachment" occurred as "corporate" values and practices emerged that clashed with the "community" prescribed structural context within the CHA. The CAHA interpretive scheme, embedded more in the structural characteristics of the CHA became



residual, whereas HC's values, enacted through everyday action or practices within the CHA, gained momentum within the association.

The *embryonic Ab* variation that existed in stage three resembled qualities that were opposite to *embryonic Ba*. It emphasized consensus-based decision-making and re-emphasized the community-driven mission, both strengths of the CAHA. Operations were still important, but were now integrated with various volunteer councils and committees of the association. One participant compared the strength of the *embryonic Ba* design to the *embryonic Ab* design as follows:

Hockey Canada brings more of a business culture where there is an expectation that decisions will be made quickly whereas in the public service type view, more is left to committees – a wider input-feedback position is used before those decision are made (CHA Executive Committee Volunteer).

The CHA oscillated between these two embryonic forms as the gravitational forces of each design pulled in opposite directions. The oscillations were based upon the tensions between the *Sport Marketer* and *Sport Provider* tendencies within the CHA. One CHA Manager described this as a “difference in philosophies” and a debate between the “board and operation level – what is more important – sponsorship or development?” A CHA Board member also viewed the first few years of the merger as a period of disarray where the organization followed an uncontrolled process that carried its own momentum:

Over those three years [1994-1997] I think the plate was too full to be able to blow the whistle, stop the clock and start from scratch. Now that most of the dust has cleared, I really hope that they will do that.

It is apparent that the question of strategic direction was not proactively addressed within the association; therefore, key trigger events continued to act as drivers that

enabled either the structural-embryonic Ab or the action-embryonic Ba to dominate at different times. Later restructuring efforts attempted to offer prescribed-emergent solutions to the incoherence within the association. For example, a re-organization in the late summer of 1997 tried to re-establish a residual CAHA structure where some of the marketing operations were moved outside the organization and structured through outsourcing (CHA, 1997). At the same time, the Board of Directors was reconfigured due to the completion of the three-year probationary terms that were part of the merger agreement. However, these efforts to curtail business-based emergent schemes within the CHA by re-establishing residual CAHA values via structural modifications were unsuccessful. Some elements of the *embryonic Ba* configuration were actually reinforced by the 1997 restructuring. The revised CHA organizational chart reflected a new corporate-administration model that expanded the level and number of staff positions in the sponsorship and event marketing areas (CHA, 1997). In other words, these changes reflected "grafted structures" that tried to embrace residual "community" values. But the diffusion of an emergent interpretive business framework made these structures increasingly inappropriate for the context that had evolved within the organization.

The oscillations between stages three and four generated various moments of tension and contradiction within the CHA. For example, the involvement of volunteers in some operational areas, such as events, was minimized. A CHA Board member commented that "the focus and the attention was more on the sponsors rather than a shared focus on both sponsors and volunteers". Another Board member commented that the volunteer-staff dynamic was an area where the CHA struggled considerably:

Because from the Hockey Canada perspective there was no respect for

those people who didn't bring anything to develop the game unless it was a dollar bill .. you can't put a dollar value on them so there is no respect from the Hockey Canada people about what the volunteer does for the game in this country.

However, other CHA volunteers stated that the business side of the game was poorly understood or appreciated within the association. An Executive Committee volunteer who also sat on the Board believed that marketing was a fundamental, but difficult, aspect of the association and stated: "marketing comes down to events – that's where the CAHA had it greatest difficulty". In contrast, some participants saw sponsorship growth as excessive, as is evident from the following comment:

The authority had slipped away and the marketing skills required a lot of fine-tuning – got us into contractual obligations that we had difficulty adhering to and ... were not nearly as beneficial to the association as they could have been (CHA Staff).

The *embryonic Ba* and *embryonic Ab* archetypes reflected a powerful culture clash within the CHA. Some respondents, mostly CHA staff from Hockey Canada and some upper-level volunteers, viewed the commercial values of the former Hockey Canada, as represented in the business-based marketing rationale, to be the key force directing the interpretive scheme of the association. On the other hand, several Board members felt the structural elements of the former CAHA, as represented in the massive size of the organization, was a force that placed community values at the forefront of CHA high-impact systems such as decision-making. As the change process quickened, momentum built around particular trigger events, such as the hiring of a new association President and preparing for the 1998 Winter Olympic games, which for the first time included

National Hockey League players and a women's competition. Hence, the need for focused and direct decision-making became more pronounced within the CHA. A major point which emerged was the move to limit input and enhance direction:

The whole part of the exercise, that is not specific to marketing, is trying to get things top-driven rather than bottom-driven. That is the fight we had in marketing and we will always have that fight in everything (CHA Staff).

This example illustrates that the decision-making forum within the CHA was shifted to the upper hierarchy of the CHA due to a business emphasis within the association. However, another CHA staff member noted that a change of decision-making from the volunteer to the staff forum was a result of the governance report commissioned by the association. The participant stated: "It [the governance report] focused on the volunteer and staff working relationships —where the staff has authority".

Gradually, the sequences of de-coupling alternated between emergent-prescribed and prescribed-emergent detachments and presented a pattern of diminishing difference. As a result, the CHA reached a point of archetype coherence. As the degree of difference between the interpretive-emergent and structural-prescribed mechanisms declined, the organization reached a position where the reorientation was complete. In other words, each de-coupling began to drive the same type of structural and interpretive change. Although de-coupling may be emergent or prescribed, a prescribed detachment will always begin from the existing interpretive scheme and, as a result, it is inherently skewed towards values that reinforce the initial emergent ideals within the organization. When the CHA moved from stage three to stage four, it experienced rapid and multiple

change to job descriptions, particularly for professional staff operating the organization. There was a high staff turnover, multiple new positions created, and various examples of fine-tuning operational policies such as travel, hiring, and annual performance evaluations. Ultimately, an *archetype a on B* came to be somewhat consistent within the CHA and when it stabilized, a new configuration existed.

*Discussion of the Canadian Hockey Association Design – a new Amateur Sport Enterprise Archetype*

The CHA design reflects a contemporary archetype within the Canadian amateur sport institutional sector (see Table 4:2). Earlier work on design configurations within this domain examined the nature of NSOs only until 1996 (Amis, 1998, building upon Kikulis et al. 1992; 1995a; 1995b). This study provides details of change within the sector, albeit in one organization, up to 2000. Nevertheless, the Amateur Sport Enterprise archetype seems appropriate for the larger Canadian amateur sport system given the current institutional forces affecting Canadian NSOs. For the past 15 years, the federal government has gradually decreased funding to amateur sport organizations and the state actively encouraged NSOs to find alternative sources of funding and to become self-sufficient. For example, the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework limited the allocation of funds to NSOs that contributed directly to federal government sport funding objectives (Sport Canada, 1999), and the 1998 Mills Report emphasized new economic priorities within the Canadian amateur sport system (Government of Canada, 1998).



Table 4:2: The Canadian Hockey Association Design and the Amateur Sport Enterprise Archetype Characteristics

| Archetype Components           | Canadian Hockey Association<br>Amateur Sport Enterprise (ASE) |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Organization<br>Archetype Name | Canadian Hockey Association<br>Amateur Sport Enterprise (ASE) |
| <b>Values</b>                  |                                                               |
| Orientation                    | Revenue Enterprise                                            |
| Foundation                     | Service Properties                                            |
| Focus                          | Revenue Generation                                            |
| Domain                         | System Wide                                                   |
| Scope                          | Broad                                                         |
| Client                         | Sponsor + Member                                              |
| <b>Systems</b>                 |                                                               |
| Governance                     | Divisionalized                                                |
| Control                        | Strategic and Market-Financial                                |
| Decision Making                | Operations – Professional<br>Governance – Collective          |
| <b>Structure</b>               |                                                               |
| Differentiation                | Tall structure                                                |
| Integration                    | Limited and complex                                           |

As a result, the boundaries between private, public and nonprofit sectors have been blurred (Rail, 2000; Slack, 1999; Thibault and Harvey, 1997; Harvey et al., 1995). There is evidence of growing corporate pressures upon the Canadian sport community (Stevens, 2000; Harvey et al., 1995; Rail, 2000; Government of Canada, 1998). Just as, earlier, the influx of government funding and the introduction of the quadrennial planning program pressured shifts between the "kitchen table", "boardroom" and "executive office" archetypes, this corporate trend drives the development of values, systems and structures that resemble an Amateur Sport Enterprise archetype. In this design, the market-based management approach most recently reinforced by the federal government promotes a corporate-model that is even more pronounced than the characteristics reflected by the "executive office".

In addition, the interpretive and structural elements explained in existing archetypes research for this institutional sector are no longer accurate reflections of the design of organizations operating in this sphere. New configurations have emerged such as interorganizational networks (Thibault and Harvey, 1997) and various strategic-structural orientations (Stevens, 2000). The Amateur Sport Enterprise reflects a strategic response to this environmental change. The separation between operation and governance, and formal and informal processes, is a simple way to enable staff to manage private-non-profit sector demands and for volunteers to focus upon public-nonprofit issues.

The CHA consists of what Williamson (1975) terms a M-Form organization. There is a distinct corporate centre with specific business units. However, these units are differentiated according to two domains within the organization – operations and

governance. These distinct areas also divide staff and volunteer involvement. National-level staff are responsible for functional business units, such as business operations, finance and administration, and hockey development; whereas volunteers from the provincial network, are responsible for managing the governance units, such as the Board of Directors, councils, and various standing and ad hoc committees. The distinction has separated the types of decisions that are made within the operation and governance forums of the organization. For example, one CHA Manager summarized the opinions of many CHA staff in the following statement: "I would suggest that no real significant decisions were actually made at our Board level. They are all done in-house now". In other words, within the Amateur Sport Enterprise certain key decisions are no longer brought to the Board of Directors level.

Many participants also commented on the re-distribution of control within the CHA and alluded to the prominent role of former Hockey Canada personnel. For example, one a CHA staff commented that: "We've moved the CAHA right into the backyard of Hockey Canada which is a completely different orientation". Another participant commented on the change in decision making as follows:

The CAHA was a regulatory world. The question is – can the organization ever unburden itself of that and get on with putting more time into larger developmental questions (CHA Board Member)?

These comments reveal the important volunteer and decision-making characteristics of the Amateur Sport Enterprise. First, volunteerism is a significant component of organizational values and governance, but has a modified meaning in the Amateur Sport Enterprise design. Rather than assume a guiding role similar to the former

Hockey Canada Board, or a managerial role reflected by the former CAHA Board, the CHA volunteer is now set within a hierarchical structure where there exists a professional volunteer emphasis. This structure prioritizes the involvement of professional volunteers who possess executive management skills and, therefore, are involved in operational and governance decision-making. Previously, the CAHA, where a majority of CHA volunteers came from, emphasized grassroots volunteers whose backgrounds focused upon involvement in local and provincial level hockey associations. Although the grassroots and executive volunteers are from the community-based system within the CHA, the executive volunteer has a stronger alignment to the values and orientation of the CHA staff. Grassroots volunteers are afforded respect through residual traditions such as the annual general meeting sessions and the invitation of life members to this yearly session. Overall, there is a cultural distinction in the volunteer's role where an executive volunteer is now valued over a grassroots volunteer.

Second, the Amateur Sport Enterprise design presents separate decision-making processes. In the case of policy issues, such as rules and regulations, and budgetary reports, a consensus-based approach is applied. However, in operational areas related to actual marketing and administrative initiatives, decision-making is either individualized or directive. That is, professional staff act independently or in conjunction with the executive volunteers, who provide direction. Overall, the nature of control within the organization emphasizes a high level of strategic control, a medium level of market-financial control, and a low level of operating control. These differences are reflected in the variations of accountability among and between volunteers and staff within the association.

Overall, the strength of the underlying *Sport Marketer* interpretive scheme situates the Amateur Sport Enterprise more as a revenue enterprise than as a sport-servicer. However, its structure carries remnants of the *Sport Provider* mission-based design; therefore, its foundation emphasizes service properties, not profitable ventures. The domain is extremely broad and serves both sponsors and members. This is a reflection of changes in the amateur sport institutional domain where corporate and public forces co-exist. High impact systems within the Amateur Sport Enterprise include control, governance and decision-making. These areas are managed by developing a divided governance system where volunteers operate within the governance stream and staff within the operations stream. Integration is limited to the upper hierarchy levels, while strategic, and to some extent market-financial controls, co-ordinate activities between the two.

According to the CHA merger case, an emergent type of detachment reflects a more powerful form of change since organizational members establish values and meaning within the organization through voluntary and autonomous means. This is opposed to a prescribed-detachment, or deterministic, condition where values and meanings are imposed from an existing structure upon organizational members. Within the CHA, there was an ongoing interplay between emergent and residual schemes and contexts that ultimately led to the establishment of a dominant archetype and re-coupled a commercial, market-based interpretive scheme to a tall and complex structural orientation. The CHA's underlying scheme reflected the values and meanings of the *Sport Marketer* archetype due to the early emergence of this configuration in the change process. Some members resisted this change by trying to reinforce a governance and



operational structure that resembled a *Sport Provider* archetype. However, the resistance was incomplete since subsequent responses to the initial emergence of the sport-marketer orientation were founded upon the underlying scheme of this archetype (reflected by *embryonic Ba*). Changes were made according to the business-skewed interpretive scheme that had initially emerged within the association. Thus, although a track may involve various archetype variations and de-coupling sequences, it appears that the reorientation is directed towards the values and meanings that characterize the first instance of detachment.

Hinings and Greenwood (1988) identified an "unresolved excursion" as the track where an organization has an unsuccessful re-configuration. A transformation begins, but movement into a new coherent organizational form does not occur. More recently, Cooper et al. (1996) argued that tracks thought to be unresolved excursions may actually reflect a condition called sedimentation, where a layering of structures upon values represents a coherent organizational design. The similarity of archetype sedimentation to the CHA merger track warrants a more detailed exploration of this type of change. Hence, this merger track, with its hybrid and embryonic forms, provides further insight into the discussion of sedimentation as a coherent design configuration.

Cooper et al. (1996) described sedimentation as a form that "points to persistence of values, ideas and practices, even when the formal structures and processes seem to change and even when there may be incoherence" (p. 624). In this case, organizational change represented a layering of one archetype upon another. The difficult aspect of sedimentation is that, although researchers examining the dynamics of change within an organization may be able to identify this form, it is not apparent to organizational

members constructing and acting within the context (Cooper et al., 1996). For example, there are times when organizational members believe structures and values are coherent when, in fact, further analysis reveals design incoherence. However, in the case of the CHA, the organizational members were aware of the inherent contradictions generated by the merger and negotiated these tensions.

Support for archetype sedimentation was evident in comments from both CHA volunteers and staff who recognized that remnants of each parent organization existed, in varying degrees, within the new CHA. One participant described the sedimentation process as follows:

There was no planning for the phasing in of the merger, or preparing people, or re-writing people's job descriptions. So, for a long time they [the CAHA and HC members] just co-existed. There's Hockey Canada and here's the CAHA. No one looked at how the two corporate cultures were completely diametrically opposed ... Someone has to take someone over. The CAHA is so goody-two-shoes and deals with the volunteers – and Hockey Canada was the money – that were all the corporate connections, glitz and glitter. So, Hockey Canada took the CAHA over (CHA Manager from CAHA).

It is evident from this statement that the Hockey Canada interpretive scheme was the foundation of the sedimented CHA design. Other CHA staff from both the CAHA and HC agreed that elements of the two parent organizations remained in the new CHA but differentiated the degree of remnants between the governance and operation forums. For example, a CHA Manager from Hockey Canada commented that:

The essence of all this was that – as opposed to a merger of the two structures of the organizations – it became basically an acquisition of the CAHA, with a name change and the addition of a few Board members. The operations, interestingly enough, became much more of a merged organization because the operating staff of Hockey Canada came together with the staff of the CAHA.

This participant also expressed disappointment over the inability of the merger to create a new association:

The objective from the outset was to create a new organization – to collapse the CAHA and collapse Hockey Canada and create a new organization – a new fresh look – a new structure and so forth. It never occurred.

The CHA reflected a design that was neither the *Sport Marketer* archetype nor the *Sport Provider* Archetype, but rather a new configuration with sediments of both.

During the six years of change, various trigger events generated tensions within the CHA and gradually the Amateur Sport Enterprise design emerged. Thus, the differentiation of operational and governance domains within the Amateur Sport Enterprise is greater than that which typically exists within an "executive office" NSO design. Each area reflects different values and systems. In this way, a consensus-based approach is not utilized within the very dynamic and fast-paced areas of business operations, and individualized and direct decision-making is not applied in the committee-based, slow-paced governance domain. Thus, structural integration is centralized at the upper levels of the organization and involves senior management and executive volunteers. It is only here where the two distinct orientations must interact. The remaining levels and divisions within the association are removed from each other and will become further distanced as this orientation gains even greater stability.

Cooper et al. (1996) also suggest that sedimentation persists when organizational members are able to constitute meanings and language within the organization to justify elements of both organizational designs, albeit at different moments. They argued that

organizations are in flux and, therefore, different archetypes can dominate in different parts of the organization. This is an interesting suggestion that contradicts previous "all or nothing" notions of design coherence. It argues that during organizational transformation, competing archetypes may exist within an organizational form and, more specifically, these oppositions can be located within particular organizational elements. If archetypes can be layered upon each other, then there must be a differentiation between levels, such as the core and surface. In both the *embryonic Ab* and *Ba* forms identified in this merger, the core or sedimented archetype is reflected by the large case (e.g. the *Ab* archetype reflects a core synonymous with the interpretative scheme of the CAHA). As each variation is constituted and reconstituted, the value base slowly, but continuously, impacts the structural-interpretive alignment.

There were various points of ideological consensus and dissension along the CHA merger track. Movement towards archetype coherence or sedimentation depended upon which variation, *embryonic Ab* or *embryonic Ba*, was dominant. As mentioned earlier, critical factors occurred during the merger to impact this movement, such as the loss of staff and volunteers, the hiring of new staff or volunteer advancement, the 1998 Winter Olympics, organizational re-structuring, and a major "industry" summit. Cooper et al. (1996) argued that the mutually supportive and contradictory systems and structures that exist within a sedimented archetype present no dominant logic. This condition reflects what Hinings and Greenwood (1988) termed a schizoid incoherence or an unresolved excursion. However, the Amateur Sport Enterprise archetype components are clearly embedded within particular design elements – the sport-marketer interpretive elements and the sport-provider structural elements. Thus, in this case the "dualism" of the

sedimented *a on B* archetype reflects a coherent design, not an incoherent one. The design reflects a new evolutionary direction where dualism represents a fundamental configuration condition.

Further, the point of convergence between the two layers rests within the high impact systems of control and decision-making within the organization. Although Cooper et al. (1996) recognized the mutually constitutive nature of interpretive schemes and structures, other researchers claim that high impact systems are driven more strongly by the latter (Kikulis, 2000; Amis, 1998; Hinings et al. 1996; Cunningham, Slack and Hinings, 1987; Ranson et al. 1980). In the Amateur Sport Enterprise, it is evident that the interpretive scheme reflecting HC values actively negotiated its way around the deterministic structure reflecting residual CAHA characteristics. That is, informal decision-making operated within the formal control forums and, therefore, integration was highly complex. Although the divided governance-operation structure presents some formal connection between these two streams, the sedimented archetype reflects divergence between formal and informal activities, particularly within high-impact systems such as decision-making. This offers a new interpretation of a "gestalt" where the congruence among all organizational elements may be reflected in both formal and informal organizational activities.

#### *The Pace of Change in the CHA Merger*

In addition to examining whether change is incremental or radical, it is also



possible to explore the pace of the organizational transformation. Several scholars have suggested that the pace of change can be evolutionary or revolutionary in nature (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988; Tushman, Newman and Romanelli, 1986; Tushman and Romanelli, 1985). The theory of punctuated-equilibrium (Romanelli and Tushman, 1994; Gersick, 1991; Tushman and Romanelli, 1985) examines the interplay between these two tempos of change and argues that an organization undergoes a long-term stage of evolutionary change, punctuated by moments of revolutionary transformation. Large scale, or radical change can be disruptive and an organization requires a period of time after such upheaval to re-establish stability. Pettigrew (1990) suggests that the periods of slow pace are needed to enable an organization to adjust to rapid upheaval. On the other hand, Tushman and Romanelli (1985) and Miller and Friesen (1980a, 1980b, 1984) suggest that successful revolutionary change occurs during short periods of time. Thus, it appears that archetype re-orientations are complete when there are moments of radical transformation followed by stages of incremental change.

The CHA merger exhibited short periods of change at the beginning and end of the time frame and longer periods in the middle of the research period (see Figure 4:5 on p. 109). From May 1994 until May 1995, the CHA reflected a dual embryonic archetype and then schizoid incoherence. The schizoid variation was triggered by the costly Calgary expansion, the poor integration of Canadian Hockey In-line, and the dramatic budget deficit. Each of these events created a great deal of uncertainty and unrest within the CHA. It became clear soon after the merger agreement was signed that the planning process was vague and ineffective. Consequently, the prescribed framework for change gained little confidence and the organization entered a state of disarray

Stages two and three involved different design variations over a four-year time period. Here, various interpretive scheme-structural detachments occurred. The *embryonic Ba* design established an "emergent" position within the organization as some organizational elements began to converge together. These included predominantly, but not exclusively, the Hockey Canada interpretive scheme that lingered within the new association. This was followed by the *embryonic Ab* design, reflected by various prescribed re-structurings of the organization, which encompassed some Canadian Amateur Hockey Association values reflected in the governance review and the hiring of a CHA president who was a former CAHA Vice-President. Movement between stages two and three did not reflect a linear path but rather revealed oscillations between the two, as well as a period of delay. The emergence of the *embryonic Ba* variation was a result of efforts to establish a CHA business plan. However, the transition to a commercial focus within the CHA was not easy. Many trigger events, such as a re-structuring initiative, hiring a new President, and preparing for the 1998 Winter Olympic Games emphasized both commercial and community interpretive schemes within the CHA. Finally, the period from May 1999 until the next summer illustrates a frame of swift development where a new CHA design, the Amateur Sport Enterprise archetype, gained stability and coherence. Here, the business emphasis that was triggered by two years of Olympic Games preparation was re-emphasized by the findings of a Governance Report that suggested downsizing the Board of Directors and enhancing the ability of staff to control the CHA operations (CHA, 1998).

This case offers a number of insights regarding the pace of organizational change. First, it supports Brown and Eisenhardt's (1997) position that a third, medium-pace of

change exists in addition to both revolutionary and evolutionary tempos. In comparison to stages one and four, the middle two stages may at first, appear to have a slower tempo. However, a more detailed analysis of the pace of change reveals that the process actually illustrated a continuous and somewhat accelerated rate of change throughout all the stages. This is due to the constant stream of trigger events that initiated significant change throughout the six-year period. The oscillations reflect a number of adjustments in the consonance of the CHA design and reveal a level of heightened change activity. In other words, although stages two and three are longer, compared to stages one and four, the pace across all stages is relatively accelerated. In addition, the emergence of different design configurations reflects a scale of change that is greater than incremental; but the variations along the track cannot be considered radical in scale until the end of stage four, where the design status of the CHA reaches a point of significant stability and coherence.

Second, the data revealed a connection between foundational design values and the pace of change. Fox-Wolfgramm et al. (1998) found that the strategic orientation of an organization has a strong influence on the pace of change. In this study, the more general character of the interpretive scheme of a design variation along the track influenced the pace of change. The oscillation between *embryonic Ba* and *embryonic Ab* was driven by the powerful interpretive tensions between the *Sport-Provider* and *Sport-Marketer* orientations within the CHA. One design was community-inclusive, while the other was individual-directive.

Third, the case reinforces the need to research pacing according to operational cycles that are reinforced within a particular organization. Miller and Friesen (1980) suggested a close alignment between the rhythm of change and the pattern of work within

an organization. The CHA operated according to critical annual, semi-annual, and fall planning meetings that offered opportunities for organization-wide review and discussion.

It is easy to note the tempo of change according to these moments of congregation.

Finally, Sastry (1997) argues that successful change requires internal pacing. Pacing mechanisms can determine the temporal pattern of organizational change. For example, time-based mechanisms are better suited for turbulent environments, while event-based mechanisms are effective in calm environments (Sastry, 1997; Gersick, 1994). The internal context of the CHA during the merger reflected a turbulent environment where considerable culture clash generated unrest and uncertainty. This atmosphere was impacted by various trigger events that generated momentum towards either a commercial or community focus within the association. For example, the corporate underpinnings of the business plan, governance report, and 1998 Winter Olympics favoured an *embryonic Ba* variation. However, efforts towards organizational restructuring reinforced an *embryonic Ab* variation.

This case analysis of the CHA merger reveals a combination of event-based and time-based pacing mechanisms. For example, the early integration stage passed quickly as soon as the financial performance of the organization declined. This led to two stages where additional events as well as regular intermittent meetings influenced the pace of change throughout stages two and three. In other words, both mechanisms played a role and their complementary impact have driven the "accelerated" pace illustrated in this case as opposed a revolutionary or evolutionary tempo.

This chapter has described and explained the CHA merger according to archetypes and organizational tracks. Prior to the CHA merger, the CAHA and Hockey

Canada reflected *Sport Provider* and *Sport Marketer* organizational designs respectively. The signing of a merger agreement in May 1994 initiated a process of radical transformation and led to the formation of a new archetype, the Amateur Sport Enterprise. Various trigger events and decoupling mechanisms influenced the development of the CHA into a new sedimented archetype with both commerce-based values and community-based structures. Further analysis of the Amateur Sport Enterprise archetype will be presented in chapter five where attention will be given to the specific internal organizational dynamics that occurred during the merger. This discussion will complement chapter four by elaborating upon the intra-dynamics that influenced the change process.



## CHAPTER 5

### ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS

*The relation of an organization to the external environment is, however, only one source of institutional experience. There is also an internal social world to be considered.*

Selznick (1957: 7)

*Our organization doesn't have schisms, it has chasms.*

Canadian Hockey Association Member (September, 1997)

#### Introduction

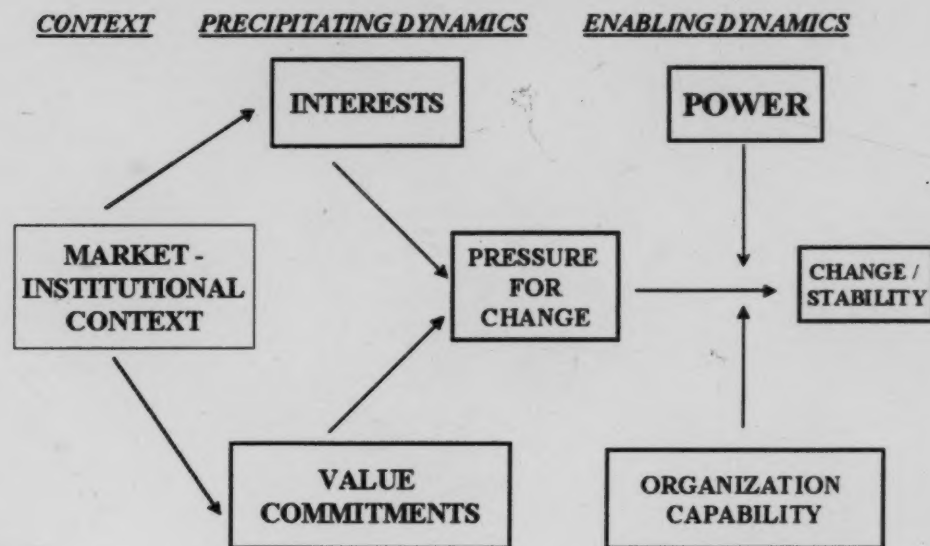
Chapter three outlined the context and history surrounding the CHA merger. In particular, it analyzed the institutional dynamics of the Canadian hockey system and the role of different organizations, coalitions and professional elites in shaping and reshaping the hockey context. The purpose of the discussion was to outline a framework upon which to situate the CHA merger case study. In chapter four, the analysis shifted from a systemic level to an organizational level. Here, the organizational track for the CHA merger was identified. This examination included a review of how pace, sequence and trigger events influenced the CHA merger track. Chapter five now moves the analysis from an initial identification and explanation of the merger track to a detailed examination of the internal factors that impacted the CHA merger process. This chapter

will extend the CHA merger case analysis to explore four key intra-dynamics of change - interests, value commitments, power and organizational capability - and the influence of each upon organizational change. In addition, the discussion will examine how these four intra-dynamics of change interrelate to each other.

### **An Institutional Model of Change**

In an effort to bridge both voluntaristic and deterministic elements of organizational change, Greenwood and Hinings (1996) created a model for institutional change that includes external and internal factors (see Figure 5:1). The model is based upon the notion of archetypes (Miller and Friesen, 1980a, 1980b, 1984), or tightly-coupled value-structure designs, and seeks to explain how an organization changes from one configuration to another. They argue that an organization exists within an institutional context and describe this environment in terms of the pervasive market and institutional pressures influencing an organization. The market context impacts an organization according to different industry trends and competitive pressures. The norms or beliefs that exist within an organizational sector or field characterize the institutional context. Both of these contextual forces are included in the model and represent exogenous forces that may lead to both organizational and institutional responses.

The model also includes endogenous factors. Greenwood and Hinings (1996) and Greenwood et al., (1996) explain organizational response to pressures within an institutional field as a function of the organization's internal dynamics. The model builds

**Figure 5:1 - Model for Understanding Organizational Change**

Greenwood and Hinings (1996: 1034)

upon earlier work by Oliver (1992, 1991) which explores processes of de-institutionalization and the variation in strategic responses of organizations to institutional pressures. Overall, Greenwood and Hinings (1996) emphasizes the "role of intra-organizational dynamics in accepting or rejecting institutionalized practices" (p. 1032). Although the model includes exogenous and endogenous variables, the present discussion will focus only upon the four endogenous factors -- interests, value commitments, power and organizational capability -- and how they influenced the CHA merger. Of these four, the precipitating dynamics, which include interests and value commitments, are seen as factors that generate a condition for change. On the other hand, the enabling dynamics, which include power and organizational capability, influence the direction of change. In the following section, each factor is described in greater detail and its role in the CHA merger is explained.

### **The Role of Internal Differentiation as an Intra-organizational Dynamic of Change**

In their empirical study of change within professional accounting firms, Greenwood et al. (1996) explored the micro-processes of de-institutionalization and re-institutionalization. Here, the impact of organizational differentiation upon the nature of the four intra-organizational dynamics was explored. The key position expressed in their study is the impact of organizational sub-units, or schisms, upon the intra-organizational dynamics of organizational change. Selznick (1957) argued that the search for security within an organizational setting is "reflected in the struggle of individuals for place and

preferment, in rivalry among units within the organization, and in commitment to ingrained ways of behaving" (p.9). Therefore, schisms can be conceptualized as reflections of organizational rivalry and territoriality, and can be situated as a key factor within the model. In this way, the configuration of Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) model must be sensitive to a diversity of internal social needs. Depending on the nature of organizational groups, various types of interests, values, powers, and capabilities exist, and the impact of each factor upon internal differentiation depends upon how these rivalries and territories are constituted and re-constituted within an organization at different moments.

When change involves a merger, the degree of differentiation within the new organization increases. Members from each parent organization become protective and territorial because of the uncertainty surrounding the merger process, and therefore, boundaries, or distinctions, become entrenched (Nahavandi and Malekzadeh, 1993; Buono and Bowditch, 1989; McCann and Gilkey, 1989). Differentiation is defined as "the differences in cognitive and emotional orientations among managers in different functional departments" (Daft, 1992: 436). The Canadian Hockey Association reflects a highly differentiated organization in which various sub-units or schisms exist, such as staff versus volunteers, CAHA versus Hockey Canada members, hockey development versus hockey operations, and national office versus provincial branches. First, the degree of spatial differentiation within the CHA was very high. The original CAHA head office was located in Ottawa while Hockey Canada was based in Calgary. After the merger, the CHA maintained the Ottawa office, but they also opened a head office in Calgary, and formed five regional Centres of Excellence across the country. Therefore,



geographical distance coupled with new regional centres increased spatial and vertical complexity because there were more locations and levels within the CHA structure.

Second, horizontal differentiation also increased because the merger generated an expansion of programs and staffing. The CHA consisted of two managerial streams – operations and governance. In other words, there was a clear division between the units in which professional staff and volunteer members primarily operated. Volunteers represented 13 provincial Branches as well as four other hockey entities, including the Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Association, the National Hockey League, the National Hockey League Players Association, and the Canadian Hockey League. Volunteers focused mainly on governance activities within the Board of Directors, councils, or standing and ad hoc committees (CHA, 2000). Further functional differentiation was evident in the distribution of staff among three different operational units within the association (CHA, 1997). Business operations included marketing, sponsorship, event planning, and communications. This unit functioned like a sales division within a large for-profit corporation because its primary role was to generate revenues for the organization. A second unit, hockey operations, included all development programs and national teams, and acted as the production or servicing arm of the association. Finally, the finance and administration department involved areas such as regulations, insurance, and accounting. Overall, the CHA experienced rapid expansion during the merger that increased organizational complexity.

Horizontal differentiation also grew because of the retention of staff from both the CAHA and Hockey Canada. The retention created greater levels of specialization among professionals working in the CHA. The association expanded from 40 to 70 staff

between 1996 and 1998. In the former CAHA, staff members were "generalists" in that they would not only manage program development but also provide input into the promotion and marketing aspects. However, the inclusion of corporate "specialists" from Hockey Canada, who worked on business as opposed to programming activities, made the education and skill levels among CHA staff more distinct. This translated into further differences in the attitudes of staff within the association, as well as the time frames by which they operated and managed their respective areas. The CHA also developed high horizontal differentiation because its products and services needed to be managed by separate departments. For example, administration was divided according to high performance programs, development programs according to coaching, officiating and trainers, event-based programs, such as national and regional championships, and product-programs that involved merchandising. These last two categories reflect areas where the CHA specifically expanded its operations after the merger.

The final form of differentiation that sharpened as a result of the merger was interpretive. The CHA merger involved the amalgamation of a *Sport Marketer* archetype (Hockey Canada) and a *Sport Provider* archetype (CAHA). Although both parent organizations operated within the larger Canadian hockey institutional system, they were associated with different interpretive elements of the game. Therefore, these two distinct institutional values, community and commerce, were the driving forces behind much of the structural differentiation that existed within the CHA. In addition, an interpretive division emerged as a powerful schism that influenced other intra-organizational dynamics.

When asked about the degree of distinction within the CHA, participants provided examples of spatial, vertical, horizontal and interpretive differentiation. For example, many CHA volunteers and managers recognized the extensive expansion of the association. This is reflected by the comment from one respondent:

I'm not sure anyone would have been able to predict the rapid growth of the new organization. There are more demands for high performance that created demands on our development side (CHA Senior Manager).

The growth included volunteer specialization where the volunteers reflected distinct backgrounds and skills. Volunteers joining the association after the merger had professional skills in finance, marketing and legal areas. A CHA volunteer who was a former CAHA Chair described this change in volunteer skill sets as follows:

I don't think you can compare the volunteers from Hockey Canada and the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association. They are different. The volunteers from the CAHA side are hands-on volunteers – very active. The volunteers from Hockey Canada were mostly political appointments – high profile people. They didn't have the time or the interest to get in and get their hands dirty.

Rather than value the local-level administrative skills of grassroots volunteers, the CHA began to specialize and sought volunteers with the expertise to serve new professional needs. Interpretive differentiation was also a critical issue after the merger. For example, the internalization of the antagonistic tradition that existed between the CAHA and Hockey Canada into the CHA is evident from the following statement from a former HC Board member: "Some felt that the culture gap – where you had the entrepreneurial organization and the bureaucratic organization – was too large a gap".

In fact, an analysis of values, which considers the nature of dominant groups within the organization and the interpretive schemes and practices they embrace, is a

critical consideration for understanding organizational change. A variation in the status of certain groups automatically presents the issue of elite and non-elite members and acknowledges a need to address how values come to dominate within an organization. The connection between organizational values and groups has been explained by Greenwood et al. (1996) who stated that an organization's response to change "will be a function of the *value orientations* of the major groups within the organization, the extent to which groups are dissatisfied with the realization of their *interests*, the distribution of *power* between groups, and the existence of a *capability for action*" (p. 2) [emphasis in original]. Previous discussions of the relation between organizational change and organizational elites in Canadian sport associations presented a static description of group values (Hinings et al., 1996), or explored conflict in the first stage of change and how it impacts specific power struggles between groups in late stages (Amis, Slack and Berrett, 1995).

In this study, the data reveal four major divisions, or schisms, that emerged during the CHA merger. The most obvious distinction within the CHA was the division between the parent organizations involved in the merger. Even though efforts were made to integrate the operational and governance elements of the CAHA and Hockey Canada, the CHA was essentially partitioned into CAHA members and HC members. A second fault line existed between the marketing and development units within the association. One participant described this division as follows:

You could cut a knife through the tension. Clear disrespect for both sides. The development side saw no value in what the marketing people did. The marketing people felt the development people had not idea (CHA Manager).

A third division was identified between staff and volunteer members of the association. Some of these tensions continued from the CAHA itself, which involved a history of struggle between these two groups. However, the differentiation was compounded within the CHA because most of the Hockey Canada members joining the CHA were staff and therefore, the CAHA-HC division also encouraged a separation of the development and marketing managers. The final schism, which emerged within the CHA during the later stages of the merger, was an upper-level versus lower-level differentiation. This schism influenced relations within both the operations and governance areas of the association. For example, communication was vague and limited, particularly between the senior staff, including the president, vice-presidents and Directors, and the Managers. Similarly, communication within the Board of Directors varies according to levels where Council Chairs were the least involved, Branch Presidents were moderately involved, and Officers who sat on the executive committee were closely involved in decision-making. Thus, the opportunity to gain input and hold decision-making authority varied among the levels of the governance system.

Although it is possible to identify major fault lines that existed within the CHA during the six years following the merger, it is important to recognize that dominant groups within an organization are dynamic, and consider how these groups may re-configure on an ongoing basis. In this way, schisms are conceptualized as fluid entities where a process of *value negotiation* occurs within various pockets of activity. Group variation generates a collection of interpretive schemes that are bantered about within the organization, rather than a static distribution of groups that are permanently coupled to specific values. Therefore, researchers must recognize that the attachment of values to



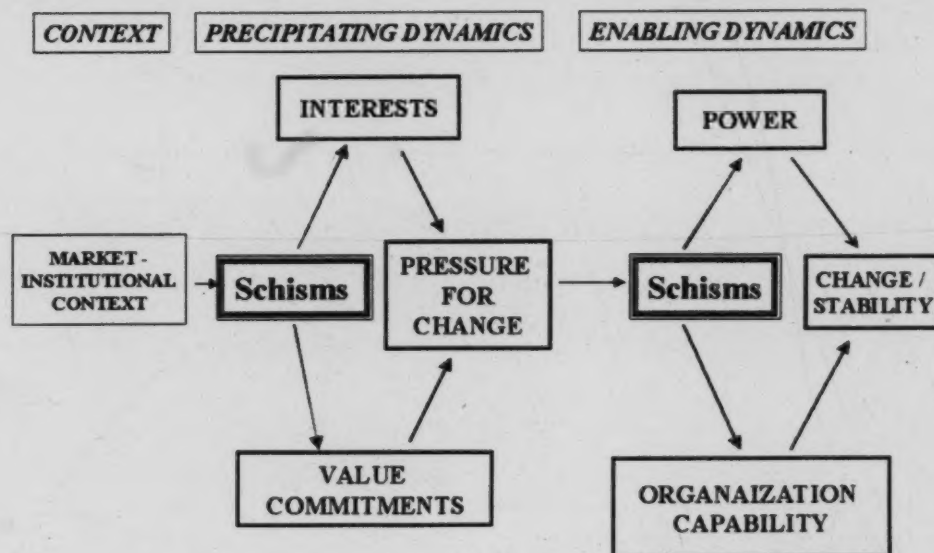
specific groups should not be a consideration only at the beginning of a change process, but rather needs to be re-visited throughout all transformation stages.

When asked to comment on how schisms were constructed within the CHA, members offered interpretations of three key groups within the association, which included the CHA staff, the Board of Directors, and the Branch Presidents. Fifteen of the 38 participants identified the most critical group within the organization to be the CHA staff. Seven of these responses specifically named the President, a staff member, as the most powerful person in the association. However, two participants argued it was the President and a few key upper-managers that held the most central position of power. Six of the 15 pro-staff responses believed that it was the marketing staff, not the President, who were situated at the core of the power nexus. Second, 11 interviewees believed the CHA Board of Directors, a volunteer body, was the critical core group within the association. Of these, four respondents viewed power to be centralized specifically within the Executive Committee, consisting of the Chair and Officers, rather than the Board as a whole. Finally, two of the 38 interviewees believed that governance played a central role, but specifically identified the 13 Branch members as the critical power group. The remaining 10 participants suggested the issue of power among groups still needed to be determined during the post-merger period, or offered no comment on this aspect of group dynamics within the organization. The lack of consensus over whether there exists a central leadership group within the association – and, if so, who that group represents – reveals that schisms exist within the association, particularly over which group should direct it. In addition, the diversity of opinions across CHA volunteers and staff reveals that the positioning of a group within the core of an organization is a fluid

condition and this dynamism may actually represent a permanent characteristic of an Amateur Sport Enterprise design.

In summary, the merger between the CAHA and HC created greater heterogeneity within the new CHA. Vertical, horizontal, spatial and interpretive differentiation offered both formal and informal distinctions among various groups within the association. Therefore, the merger process was fuelled by an increasing number of opportunities for debate and disagreement. Major dissension arose when different groups tried to secure a dominant role within the new association. Participants identified four key fault lines within the association that differentiated power among groups: CAHA versus HC members, development versus marketing departments, staff versus volunteers, and upper-level versus lower-level management and governance. In addition, they viewed the most critical group to be one of four options; the CHA staff, the Board of Directors, the Branch Presidents, or an as yet to be determined group. Given the prevalence of fault lines within the CHA merger case, schisms should be incorporated into the Greenwood and Hinings (1996) model of institutional change as a factor influencing both precipitating and enabling dynamics (see Figure 5:2). The following discussion highlights the influence of the four intra-organizational dynamics - interests, value commitments, power and organizational capability - to interpret the changes that occurred along the CHA merger track.

**Figure 5:2 - Schisms as an Intra-organizational Dynamic of Change**



Modified from Greenwood and Hinings, 1996 1034

## **Intra-Organizational Dynamics and the Canadian Hockey Association Merger Track**

### *The Precipitating Dynamics - Value Commitments*

The first precipitating dynamic is value commitments. There are a variety of ways in which organizational values can be conceptualized. Pettigrew (1987) suggested that values reflect a set of dominant beliefs or ideologies. Scott (1995a) commented that values are what individuals within an organization prefer or desire. Each of these views conceptualizes values as dominant beliefs held by particular groups within an organization. It is important to recognize that not all values are created equal within an organization. Hinings and Greenwood (1988) argued that different value commitment patterns have varying influences upon change or inertia. They explained four main patterns of value commitments that can be held by groups within an organization. These patterns relate to the commitment of groups within an organization to the core ideas and values embodied in the organization.

First, there may exist a status quo pattern where there is widespread commitment to the existing interpretive scheme within an organization. Second, an indifferent pattern to commitment reflects low commitment to prevailing and alternative interpretive schemes. Both of these patterns create little pressure for change. Third, a competitive commitment presents substantial commitment to two or more interpretive schemes. In other words, groups believe there are "different ways of conceptualizing an organization's business" (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988: 52). Finally, a reformative pattern illustrates widespread commitment to an alternative interpretive scheme. Both the

competitive and reformatory patterns create pressure for change. A competitive pattern de-stabilizes the existing organizational arrangement as groups seek different types of modifications. However, a reformatory commitment creates a pressure for change through a consensus over the new values and beliefs that will be embraced within the organization.

Prior to the CAHA-HC amalgamation, there were varying value preferences towards the merger, how it should be conducted and what terms should be adopted. There existed a level of dissatisfaction within both the CAHA and Hockey Canada that generated pressure to break from their inertial tracks and seek an alternative organizational form - a merger (CAHA, 1993a; CAHA, 1994). Although there were some key concerns before the merger agreement was signed, organizational members from the CAHA and HC looked upon the union as a new starting point and accepted. That is, the initial post-merger stage revealed a status quo commitment within the CHA.

Many CHA members offered the "official line" when asked why the merger occurred - that is - the value it offered in servicing the Canadian public. There was now one organization to provide an expansive scope of services. A CHA Executive Committee member felt the new CHA "spoke truly on behalf of Canadian hockey". Many CHA Board members commented that the CHA was now a "complete" organization that offered programs "from the cradle to the grave". Another CHA Executive Committee member stated that the CHA included "youth through oldtimers - we have the opportunity to bring all of hockey together under one umbrella operation". In addition, several of the Board members interviewed believed that a union was an important move to court corporate Canada. One united hockey organization was critical



to gaining sponsorship support for the costly CHA programs. Finally, most of the upper-level CHA Managers believed that one Canadian hockey entity would garner greater political clout on the international scene where Canada was often out voted and out-manuevered by other countries within the International Ice Hockey Federation forum.

An analysis of all interview data reveals that when the merger officially began there was a "calm after the storm" as organizational members became accustomed to the structures and systems of the new association. However, when the organization posted a deficit budget in 1996, resource scarcity increased and there was a consensus that the merger plan needed to be modified (CHA, 1996). In other words, the status quo commitment to the merger plan soon changed to a "spirit of reformation". It was obvious that groups held differing views about how the organization should function and these gradually began to emerge within various practices, particularly the types of communication and decision-making that occurred among and between volunteers and staff within the association. The high degree of differentiation created multiple values and differing opinions regarding how the new association should operate. The powerful divergence in belief systems between the CAHA and HC is reflected in the following statement from a CHA Manager:

Sometimes change leads to chaos and chaos reigns. Chaos can be creative, productive and stimulating, but in the long run it can lead to the crumbling of foundations, incessant questioning and, eventually, despair. Up until 1994, the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association was a national organization of substance, reflecting the very basic values of its countless blue collar volunteers, dedicated to serving its members. The needs of the Branches, the Minor Hockey Associations and, the teams and leagues were paramount in decision making. Staff at all levels demonstrated a commitment to this volunteers-based organization, often bringing experience at the Branch level and their own years of volunteerism in the game. Hockey Canada, created for one purpose, one team, completely unconnected to Branches and Minor Hockey Associations, espoused

values at almost complete odds with the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association. The CAHA has the strength and support of hundreds and thousands of volunteers. Hockey Canada had an elite and questionably moral board, a small staff and ..... a team. When the two groups merged, hockey would come under one roof again, because the most elite level of programming would be added to the roots of the game. Hockey Canada was in trouble, doomed to an eventual extinction but the merger gave them a new springboard and, entrepreneurs at heart, they managed to not only merge but submerge 100 years of tradition and values.

This state of uncertainty generated significant pressure for change. One group, the senior-level staff, responded to the ambiguity by imposing top-down modifications to the amalgamation plan rather than by staging a collective strategic session involving all staff and the Board. For example, many CHA staff felt that the restructuring initiative in the summer of 1997 was developed by a small group of senior Managers and involved little input from other operations and governance levels. There was no open forum for members to share and express their views, and discussions regarding structural and managerial changes were relatively closed. In the meantime, staff satisfaction dropped as the CHA's revenues fell and cost rose.

Amis (1998) revealed that organizational re-orientation occurs when great lengths are taken to accommodate the interests of different groups within the organization. However, this CHA merger case illustrates the difficulty of achieving the right mix of accommodation and exclusivity in decision making. Every Board member and a majority of CHA staff believed that only a few key people within the CAHA and HC ultimately made the critical decisions about the merger plan. A CHA staff member from the CAHA commented that "there was a lack of communication from senior management to middle management to support staff in terms of asking for input, suggestions, ideas - general feedback on merging the two operations". The majority of participants felt that

information about the merger was vague and many, particularly staff whose personal and professional lives were strongly affected by the change, stated that they were unsure of what was happening. The frustration over the poor merger planning process was expressed by a CHA Manager in the following statement:

In 1995, when the entire world is stepping onto the technology highway, when management is being forced to accept employees who want to put families and friends first ..... the CHA decides to move people across the country. The former "heart" of the association, the Development Staff, will be uprooted and sent hundreds of miles away from 60% of the entire hockey population in Canada, in order to ... in order to???

However, many participants felt decision-making later in the merger involved too many people and it was difficult to gain consensus or generate focus. The data show that various organizational interests were incorporated into the decision-making process through sub-unit integration mechanisms, such as ad hoc committees. Hence, decision-making within the CHA was perceived as either overly exclusive or overly inclusive and, in both instances, high member dissatisfaction existed. This reveals that, carried to its extreme, the political strategy of incorporating as many interests as possible in the change process is a very difficult dynamic to manage and can have adverse effects upon organizational effectiveness.

As the merger progressed, the reformative value commitment quickly shifted to a competitive value commitment during stage two of the merger. At this time, two distinct opinions regarding the role of marketing within the CHA emerged. On the one hand, half of the respondents, particularly the Board of Directors and CHA Managers within the hockey operations unit, opposed the prominent role marketing had assumed after the merger. They felt the values and practices of the unit had shifted the focus from

servicing members to servicing sponsors. On the other hand, half of the respondents, specifically the Executive Committee volunteers and CHA managers within the business operations unit, believed an appreciation for marketing was needed for the organization to become successful. For example, one CHA Manager within the business operations unit commented that it was important to "recognize the role of sponsorship in the game of hockey". Overall, the competitive commitment arose due to divergent interpretive schemes – one position that supported community-based values and another that supported commerce-based values. This division is evident from the following comment by one CHA Board member: "I think the organization is having growing pains – it is still trying to find direction".

#### *Precipitating Dynamics - Interests*

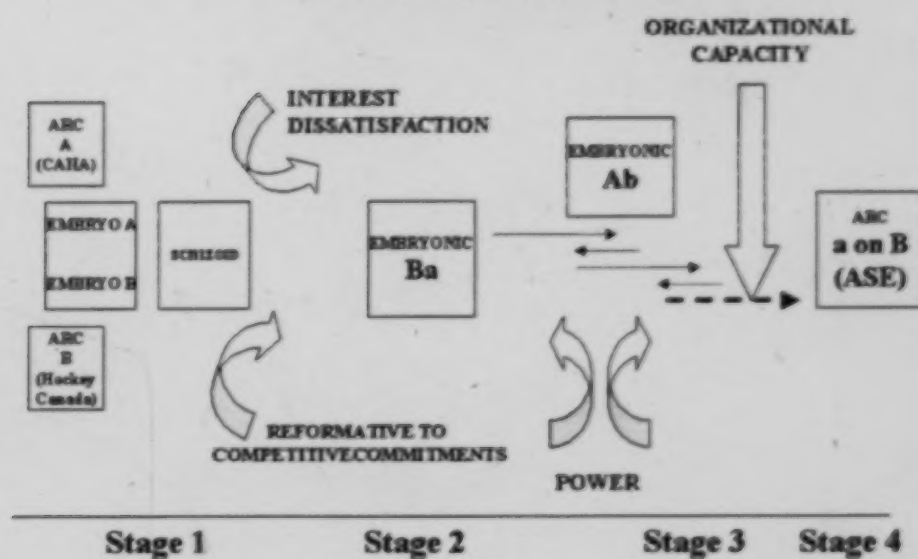
Hinings and Greenwood (1988) conceptualize interests according to the relationship between an individual or group and the distribution of material resources within an organization. They set interests as a discrete analytical factor in order to recognize that organizations are composed of groups that serve their own needs. They suggest that organizational members or groups may be either satisfied or dissatisfied with how their interests are served. In this way, organizations are recognized as "political systems in which advantaged groups jostle with disadvantaged groups to sustain patterns of privilege" (Hinings and Greenwood, 1988; 53). In cases where there is interest

satisfaction, low pressure for change exists. However, a condition for change is enhanced when dissatisfaction levels within an organization are high.

As mentioned earlier, the initial stage of the merger followed a pre-determined integration plan. That is, the CAHA and Hockey Canada, through joint negotiations, formulated a template by which the new CHA combined governance and operational components from each parent organization, which was discussed at the CAHA semi-annual Board meeting in September 1993 (CAHA, 1993a). There was a lengthy but limited dialogue about the amalgamation, however an accepted plan existed by the time of the merger in May 1994. Hence, the organizational track began with a blended organizational design (reflected as *embryo A-embryo B* in Figure 5:3). The key factor that influenced interests was a scarcity of resources within the new CHA. The merger presented new, and wholly unexpected, fiscal demands. For example, one CAHA staff member noted that because the CHA retained all staff from HC and the CAHA, the new association faced salary costs much greater than had existed in each parent organization. New positions were created such as a Vice-President of Business Operations, a Manager of Marketing, and a Manager of Communications. The organization also assumed management of a large Olympic team program. The 1998 Winter Olympic Games were the first Olympics to officially include professional hockey players and, therefore, the CHA had to interact not only with the International Olympic Committee but also the National Hockey League. In addition, for the first time, women's hockey was an official Olympic event and, as a result, full-time coaches and managers were hired for the women's program.



**Figure 5:3 - Intra-dynamics and the Canadian Hockey Association Merger Track**



High capital costs were associated with expansion projects, such as a new CHA office in Calgary and Centres of Excellence regional offices in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. In the first two years following the merger, the CHA, in cooperation with the Calgary Olympic Development Association (CODA), planned a major office and training facility renovations to the Father David Bauer Arena in Calgary. Unfortunately, CODA's financial support for the project was not as high as anticipated and the CHA incurred a major debt in order to generate the capital to finish the construction. An additional stranglehold on resources was introduced in March 1996, when the CHA acquired the national in-line hockey association and formed a new operational division called Canadian Hockey In-Line. Collectively, these decisions introduced major costs at a time when there were limited resources, both financial and human, within the CHA.

Finally, the data reveal that there was a high level of dissatisfaction among former Hockey Canada members regarding the process-based demands they faced within the new association. Clear differences existed between how the CAHA and HC operated prior to the merger, particularly in terms of volunteer interaction. The difference is described in the following statements:

If you look at Hockey Canada – who ran a national team – they were very busy and aggressive in working that way. Then you had the CAHA who ran programs, major meetings, and events throughout the year. Then all of a sudden you integrated those two approaches and you expected people to devote the same amount of time to their original work plan. They simply didn't have the preparation time – the lead time (CHA Senior Manager).

Hockey Canada people were uncomfortable with process – very uncomfortable with the volunteer base. They were frustrated by having to seek approval and work through the normal channels before executing whatever plan was on the table (CHA Board Member).

In addition, each interview in this study alluded to the fact that much of the conflict that emerged after the merger was due to resistance of CHA staff from Hockey Canada to the consensus-base approach of the larger CHA governance system. This opposition triggered great dissatisfaction among former CAHA members, primarily volunteers, who believed their behaviour was disrespectful and undermined the process-based values of the CHA.

Overall, both value commitments and interests generated a condition for change within the CHA in the early stages after the merger (see stage one and two in Figure 5:3). That is, significant pressure was created to change the initial integration plan. Although satisfaction was moderate within the CHA during the very early stage of the merger, members of the organization grew increasingly dissatisfied with the state of affairs as time progressed. Various fault lines opened, primarily over a competition for scarce resources, and as a result, groups championed their perceptions of the values and preferences that should be embraced within the CHA. Consequently, a competitive commitment along with the diversity of interests, manifested as a high level of dissatisfaction, de-stabilized the *embryonic A- embryonic B* configuration and moved the organization into a *schizoid incoherence* position.

#### *Enabling Dynamics - Power*

In order to understand fully how pressure for change is translated into action, it is important to examine the power distribution among members and groups within the

organization. Ranson et al., (1980) viewed organizations as political systems and recognized intra-organizational power distributions as a critical factor directing change. Hinings and Greenwood (1988) discussed the nature of power in strategic change in terms of dispersed and concentrated power. First, power may be dispersed within an organization when a variety of groups have access to key decision making processes. In contrast, concentrated power refers to a closed decision-making process where power is in the hands of a small but elite group of senior executives at the higher levels of the organizational hierarchy. As a whole, internal differentiation distinguishes one group from another and built into this formation is a structure of advantage and disadvantage (Walsh, Hinings, Greenwood and Ranson, 1981).

The beginning stage of the CHA merger reflected a power distribution that was relatively dispersed and balanced. However, the CHA implemented various growth strategies that over-extended its financial and human resources. This turmoil heightened the need for crisis management, or closed decision-making. In their studies on intraorganizational power, Hickson, Hinings, Schneck, Lee and Pennings (1971), and Hinings, Hickson, Pennings and Schneck (1974) identified three variables of power within an organization. The first factor is the ability of a group to cope with uncertainty. Hinings et al. (1974) argued that the more a sub-unit copes with uncertainty, the greater its power within an organization. The second factor relates to the ability of an organization to obtain alternative performance for the performance of a sub-unit. Hickson et al. (1971) believed that the lower the substitutability of the activities of a sub-unit, the greater its power within the organization. Finally, power can be influenced according to how critical, or central, the role of a sub-unit is to the internal activities of an

organization. The higher the pervasiveness and immediacy of a sub-unit's activities within an organization the greater its power (Hinings et al., 1974; Hickson et al. 1971). Hence, power can be based upon whether a subunit can cope with uncertainty, can be substituted by an alternative activity, or can provide a critical role within an organization.

In the CHA, a key source of power during the period of financial uncertainty was an ability to generate revenues and produce fiscal stability for the CHA. In other words, members capable of generating revenue for the organization had greater control over decision-making forums than those who could not provide funding sources. Groups that generated funds, such as marketing, sponsorship, merchandising and events were, at this stage, more critical to the CHA than groups that spent funds, such as development and team programs. Thus, at the beginning of stage two, a shift in power occurred from the CAHA group to the HC group, or more specifically, from the development towards the marketing faction. The operational control became situated among the CHA Managers rather than volunteers, specifically the staff from the former Hockey Canada, whose business experience and knowledge focused upon key revenue generating skills in marketing, sponsorship and licensing. As a result, the power afforded to the staff from HC increased due to two factors. First, the criticality of marketing services to the organization were high since the CHA was facing a fiscal crisis and approaching an Olympic season. Second, these services were unsubstitutability since a majority of CHA volunteers and former CAHA staff did not have a marketing or sponsorship skill base. As a result, the commerce-oriented interpretive scheme, which the HC staff espoused, became more dominant. The tension between commerce and community coalitions is illustrated in the following comments from two CHA Managers:



We have a situation where marketing is driving development rather than marketing supporting development. Everybody understands that there are going to be economic challenges within our organization. There is going to be so-called tough times and you need dollars. But our marketing area has too much attention and is driving a lot of the key decisions that are being made.

A Hockey Canada person is running the women's tour. A Hockey Canada person is doing all media and public relations. A Hockey Canada person is doing all of the sponsorship. Well if you ask me, those are the three most influential positions anybody could have.

Therefore, during stage two, the business-based *embryonic Ba* variation emerged. The distinction between the community and commerce orientations, or CAHA versus HC, within the organization became a prominent fault line. Power, when concentrated in the hands of the business-coalition (mainly the former Hockey Canada staff), facilitated the emergence of an *embryonic Ba* variation. One CHA Manager associated with the community-coalition commented on the power of the business-focused sub-unit as follows:

The day to day operation should be handled by staff. Anything huge that has far reaching impacts on our organization and our mandate should be directed to our Officers for discussion and decision. That has not been done.

However, one CHA Manager in the hockey operations unit deeply regretted the strength of the business-coalition within the CHA:

Always suffering from a lack of self esteem, diminishing their true worth in the shadow of the NHL; touching their forelock, shuffling their feet like the quintessential provincial bumpkins, the CAHA leaders were easy prey for a slicker, cockier and more opportunistic partner. The CAHA "team" soon started to be dismantled. Key players were retired or traded. Brash new rookies were signed up and put immediately into the starting line up. Chaos still reigned ..... and despair was not far away. The name of the game is rationalization and justification. Decisions are not made based

upon research, cost analysis, long term effectiveness. Decisions are made on hidden agendas, self aggrandizement, self interest, and even disinterest. In the wake of questionable decisions comes ... rationalization and justification. More chaos will follow, and the solid foundation, built over years of commitment to the game, will be slowly chipped away as eyes are focused only on the pinnacle of the iceberg.

The CHA annual reports for the year following 1996 show that the fiscal status of the organization improved over time. Although fiscal stability returned to the CHA, the data revealed that there still existed a high level of internal turmoil within the organization. In particular, many Board members and CHA staff believed there was a need for clear direction and leadership within the association, and this shifted demands from financial, towards symbolic skills. Hence, the volunteer Board of Directors and certain former CAHA staff who represented the community-coalition re-focused upon member-servicing as opposed to sponsor-servicing. This group challenged the business movement by promoting the community-oriented interpretive scheme at a time when development re-emerged as an association priority. The CHA Board adopted a consensus-based decision-making approach that reflected a dispersed, as opposed to a concentrated, distribution of power. This change in power dynamic resulted in the emergence of an *embryonic Ab* variation by stage three of the merger track.

However, neither one of these two coalitions harboured absolute power. One participant described the high degree of differentiation as follows:

I think the organization, in a lot of ways, is fractured in the sense that we have tried to mix two cultures. Whether it be volunteers or whether it be staff – there is a problem that is ongoing. It may be a direct function of the merger agreement and the courtship and everyone is trying to define where they should fit into the organization. But those groups do exist and I think you can pretty much identify what we would call the “hard core” CAHA staff, the “hard core” Hockey Canada staff, the “hard core”

Hockey Canada volunteers, and the "hard core" CAHA volunteers"  
(Volunteer Executive Committee member).

A CHA Manager agreed with the growing diversity within the CHA and felt that "the camps have become more divergent since the merger happened". The divergence created moments when power was concentrated within specific sub-units as well as dispersed across the CHA. On the one hand, the *embryonic Ba* archetype, reinforced through preparation for the 1998 Winter Olympics, was an intense and costly endeavour. The revenue-orientation that was triggered by this event supported a business scheme and consequently, the CHA decision-making process was closed and power remained in the hands of upper management. On the other hand, some events triggered a dispersed power distribution, which supported an *embryonic Ab* archetype. For example, a commissioned organizational audit that examined the governance structure of the CHA reflected a very open, process-based activity for the association as a whole (CHA, 1998). As a result, power oscillated between groups, such as the CAHA-community and HC-commerce coalitions, the volunteer and staff domains, and the Ottawa and Calgary national offices. Each contingent had an opportunity for input. An executive Committee volunteer felt that the distribution of power within the CHA was still being worked out and that "the power [centre] will ultimately depend on the programs that the organization decides are really important. Although you can try to be all things to all people, you can't deliver". In this way, the ability of particular groups to prominently situate their operations, interests and programs was a decisive factor.

Despite the oscillation between *embryonic Ba* and *embryonic Ab*, the *embryonic Ba* variation gradually established greater interpretive stability within the association. By

the end of stage three, the CHA was held in a long delay embracing an *embryonic Ba* variation. Movement from this embryonic state into a stronger level of coherence was the result of a second shift in power distribution, where divisions were created according to upper-level versus lower-level management and governance groups. Control and decision-making within the CHA became concentrated within two particular organizational sub-units.

First, there was a difference in the decision-making and control of staff versus volunteers groups. A CHA Manager argued that the volunteers were increasingly removed from the decision-making process in the following statement:

I don't think the volunteers have much say in what goes on. I think they would like to have more say. I feel they really don't know what goes on behind the scenes.

One CHA Board member believed the exclusion of volunteers from the decision-making process was due to a lack of capability: "The difficulty in decision making is exactly with the Board of the CHA – it is not a focused, cohesive goal-directed Board".

A second sub-unit that harboured power within the CHA were upper-level staff and volunteers. A CHA Executive Committee volunteer noted a difference between upper and lower level CHA volunteers as follows; "When I say Canadian Hockey – I see Officers. At times, there are divisions between Officers and Branch Presidents". Finally, the following two statements reveal differences in power between upper and lower level Managers and argues that much of the control was concentrated within senior staff:

I think more of the direction is coming from staff, specifically senior management. I think we are just starting to see some of the volunteers getting their backs up over that and I believe rightfully so. I think a lot is

done and pushed forward and sort of rubber stamped after the fact (CHA Senior Manager).

There is a fault line between senior management and many of the staff. I would say a gap of distrust and a lack of confidence is there (CHA Manager).

Overall, the data show that there were power differences between the horizontal components of the CHA (governance versus operations) and the vertical levels of the CHA (upper versus lower-levels). A CHA Manager explained the configuration of power into these particular sub-units as a move away from the process-based mandate of the CHA:

My perception is that the leadership seek the path of least resistance and that is to move the organization further and further away from being a democratic organization and closer and closer to the Hockey Canada model.

The strength of the commerce-coalition was extremely frustrating for a CHA Manager who felt there was a contradiction between the formal decision-making procedures and the informal practices: "you put your faith in the process but it comes down to the whims of a few".

In February 1998, a new CHA president was hired. This was followed by several staff hirings within four managerial levels. The growth was coupled with the departure of various staff members, many of whom were from the parent CAHA or had joined the CHA in the early stages of the merger. In addition, some senior level volunteers, who held key decision-making roles at the time of the merger, finished their tenure with the CHA. Thus, the staff entries in the CHA combined with volunteer exits decreased the interpretive diversity within the CHA. In other words, the values and beliefs held by



CHA members began to congregate around one commerce-based interpretive scheme. The new members entering the organization embraced the same values and beliefs as the elite business-oriented group who selected them for the organization. Over time, the concentration of power in the upper levels of the operations and governance hierarchy resulted in a new reformative commitment among the elite. That is, a widespread commitment to an alternative design - the *alpha on B archetype* - emerged in stage four.

The interpretive differentiation among groups within the CHA, which was driven by horizontal and vertical divisions within the association, had ideological significance for the orientation of the new association. The change in values can best be described according to a continuum of social-collective beliefs versus individualistic-corporate beliefs. A CHA Manager from the CAHA described the "camp on the left [social-collective] as the process group". This included various staff from the former CAHA and the Board. The participant described the "camp on the right [individualistic-corporate] as the western-based business group", and a third group, termed development, was situated somewhere in the middle of these two extremes. The participant explained the shift in power from the group on the left to the group on the right as follows:

Now the real problem is that the senior management group is a lot closer to the right than they are to the left. They may not be at the far right but they are moving. They are the ones that have moved and the problem is that they have formal power in this organization which the process group doesn't have.

For this participant, the metaphor of "left-middle-right" represented different locations within the organizations where sub-units congregated around particular values.

In the CHA merger case analysis, it is evident that the intra-dynamic of power played a key role in creating an oscillation along the CHA merger track. A dispersed

power configuration enabled various groups to gain input into decision-making forums. Both the community and business-coalitions were able to establish control within the CHA, which was reflected in the dominance of their respective interpretive schemes at different moments throughout the middle stages of the merger. However, as mentioned earlier, schisms within an organization represent dynamic entities and will continuously change. This is evident in the impact of trigger events upon the internal differentiation of the CHA. Certain triggers strengthened CAHA-versus-HC, development-versus-marketing, and staff-versus-volunteer fault lines, while others emphasized intra-staff and intra-volunteer distinctions by separating upper-versus-lower level members.

Understanding that trigger events can create crisis within an organization, it is important to consider the distribution of power at the moments when these events occur. In the case of the CHA, the major turnover in staff and volunteers enabled the elite, reflected by the senior managers and executive volunteers, to select new members who reinforced their practices and beliefs. In other words, these events led to a concentration of power and increased support for the business-coalition. Golden-Biddle and Rao (1997) found that the function of a governing board is influenced by the internal cultural context of an organization. The increasing strength of the corporate-oriented interpretive scheme, embraced by the business-coalition, reduced the formal authority of the Board, specifically within the organizational domain. In other words, the CHA Board continued to exercise decision-making control, but, this was limited to the governance, not operational, domain.

### *Enabling Dynamics - Organizational Capability*

Organizational capability relates to the degree of expertise within an organization and whether organizational members have the capacity to manage change. Capacity may be low or high depending upon the knowledge of the structures, systems and processes that are being introduced or maintained within an organization (Tushman and Romanelli, 1983). Various scholars have addressed the importance of expertise in organizational change. Pettigrew, Ferlie and McKee (1992) believe that pluralist leadership runs broadly and deeply throughout an organization, and therefore, is critical to re-orientation. Hinings and Greenwood (1988) point out that the capabilities and competencies of an organization include leadership and knowledge components. They distinguish between transformational leadership, which is the ability of an individual or group to stimulate a vision for change, and transactional leadership, which is the ability of actors to organize and plan change. In other words, these two leadership types reflect either a symbolic capacity, where organizational members emphasize motivational or visionary activities, or a technical capacity, where members emphasize planning and organizing tasks.

In the CHA merger, technical capabilities were prominent during the early stages of change, either technical or behavioural capabilities arose in the middle stages, and both technical and behavioural capabilities emerged during the final stage of the merger. The *embryonic Ba* coherence that emerged in stage two did not transfer immediately to a new coherent design because the commerce-coalition exhibited mainly technical skills and was unable to serve the symbolic needs that existed within the association at the time. In

fact, a majority of respondents indicated that a lack of symbolic direction existed within the CHA. Twenty-three of the 38 CHA participants in the study believed the CHA needed a clear vision. They commented that the association "needed an identity", had "no consensus on direction", "no consistent management", "no leadership" and "poor process". One CHA Manager articulated the vulnerability of an organization without a vision as follows: "In the absence of a strong vision within the Canadian Hockey Association, the vision, by default, can just be sold off piece by piece to corporate interest". Six respondents felt the organization was taking steps to establish a common vision, while only four believed an adequate vision actually existed within the CHA.

In addition, an analysis of CHA documents revealed an emphasis upon the completion of very specific organizational tasks within the CHA during the early post-merger time-frame, rather than motivational activities. For example, the Chairman's address to the Board of Directors at the 1995 Semi-Annual meeting in Montreal identified that the CHA had finalized its new national insurance program, completed a constitutional review, and drafted a new harassment policy (CHA, 1995b). In addition, the Vice-President, Finance and Administration reported at the AGM in May 1995 that the accounting department had initiated plans to develop a four-year budget projection to match the Olympic quadrennial cycle (CHA, 1995b). The researcher also noted during a visit to the CHA Calgary head office that little attention was given to developing a sense of unity and belonging within the CHA. For example, manager's offices were positioned along a long narrow corridor where former CAHA staff were at the opposite end from former HC staff. This observation revealed that the physical layout of the offices reflected a strong division between members from the parent organizations. Overall, the

interview, document and observation data indicated that during stage two, CHA organizational members were focused upon specific planning and operational tasks. This indicated how technical rather than symbolic capabilities were most prominent within the organization.

The community-coalition responded to the changes that occurred in stage two by developing a business plan. Several statements were included in the introduction to the business plan which highlighted the positive direction of the organization and the collective efforts taken to produce the document. These included the following:

The completed plan is the product of one (1) year's work by the Officers, Branch Presidents, Council Representatives, Council Members, Referee-in-Chief, Life Members and staff of the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA, 1997, p.2)

This document is dedicated to all players, coaches, officials, administrators, parents and other volunteers, past and present, who have made, and continue to make hockey the central unifying factor in Canada (CHA, 1997: p.2).

The re-focus upon collective decision-making and organization-wide review supported a move to the *embryonic Ab* variation in stage three. The strength of the members within the community-coalition was strategic visioning and consensus building, each of which is a symbolic skill and reflects a transformational leadership quality. Many of the coalition members were part of the former CAHA, which had implemented a strategic planning process and prided itself on the inclusivity of its "management by committee" approach. Hence, many volunteers and professionals from the CAHA developed astute skills as negotiators and salesmen within the hockey context. Similar to the symbolic deficit associated with the *embryonic Ba* coherence in stage two, the *embryonic Ab* coherence, which emerged in stage three, did not stabilize due to an under-emphasis on technical



capabilities. The community-coalition within the CHA reflected symbolic skills, and as a result, was unable to fulfil various technical needs.

As a result of the technical deficit of the community-coalition and the symbolic deficit of the commerce-coalition, the level of uncertainty among CHA members increased and the organizational design oscillated between variations. On the one hand, the commerce-based group possessed the technical marketing and budgeting skills necessary to address the critical CHA revenue needs, particularly at a time of government funding reductions and organizational debt. Unfortunately, the group did not have the ability to "champion the change", put its ideas into action (Nadler and Tushman, 1990), and revitalize the attitude among CHA members. In particular, the reorientation was not presented to organizational members in a visionary manner and failed to carry the strategic salesmanship characteristic of transformational leadership.

On the other hand, the community-based group did not possess the technical competencies, such as finance and marketing, which characterized transactional leaders. Some respondents noted the weak technical incapability of the governance leaders within the CHA as follows:

I think there is a real need for the Board to clarify who is setting the direction. Is it the Board? Is it the management who is going to provide recommendations to the Board? Where is the direction going to come from (CHA Manager from Hockey Canada)?

We will have to fine tune the responsibilities of the Officers – what they do in relation to the Board of Directors – what the Officers should be spending their time on in relation to the staff (Executive Committee Volunteer).

These comments revealed that volunteer competencies focused upon general strategic input rather than specific, task oriented responsibilities, and this deficit also generated an

oscillation between an *embryonic Ba* and an *embryonic Ab* position along the track. In other words, either transactional or transformation leadership skills dominated within stage two and three, but neither form of leadership, in isolation, was capable of generating a successful re-orientation independently.

The frustration levels that emerged because of the impasse prompted an alliance between the elite within each coalition. Thus, by stage four, there was further stratification within the existing groups to form an executive-coalition within the upper levels of the association. There were several ways in which the executive-coalition expanded its organizational capabilities. First, a select group of high level volunteers commissioned a management consultant firm to conduct an organizational audit of the association in February, 1998 (CHA, 1998a), which improved its technical capabilities. The final report recommended that the size of the CHA Board of Directors be decreased. It also stated various objectives for restructuring the governance domain including; update position descriptions for the Board, rationalize the CHA committee structure, and change the composition of the Board. Finally, some of the Audit Report recommendations targeted structural changes within the operational domain, such as defining a business model comprised of the basic day-to-day operational dimensions of the CHA.

In addition, the executive-coalition coupled its technical tasks with symbolic efforts to champion the audit process. A memo from an Executive Vice-President to all CHA volunteers and staff reflected a motivational tone in the following closing statement:

I know you are proud of this Association and would want to assist in finding the best possible course for its future. I thank you in advance for your

cooperation and look forward to discussing the final report with you at the AGM (CHA, 1998b).

Another correspondence from an upper-level manager to the CHA Officers also reflected an effort to build vision and moral within the association. It stated the following:

As you are well aware in outlining the working relationship of a volunteer organization such as ours, the process can be difficult in that it is not desirable to portray a negative image of the Association. Your ability to express the working concerns of the organization without creating any negativity in the minds of the audit representatives and thereby, protecting the integrity of the Association was certainly noteworthy. I had an opportunity to learn from your presentation and truly believe that the manner in which you relayed the information was valuable and will be beneficial to this process and the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA, 1998c).

In addition, field notes taken at the 1999 Open Ice Summit revealed a distinct effort to unite the CHA members within the larger context of the Canadian hockey community. The Open Ice Summit included representatives from every major stakeholder group in Canadian hockey, including the CHA, the NHL, the NHLPA, government, and the private sector. Every member of the CHA Board of Directors participated in the event. During the final session, the honorary Summit Chair, Ken Dryden, invited the CHA Chairman to offer closing remarks. The Chairman's speech specifically stated that the CHA will "take a leadership role in implementing the Open Ice Summit recommendations" and that the association would "need everyone's help to do it". Here, the effort was to set a clear direction and distinct profile for the CHA within the larger Canadian hockey context.

The data indicated how CHA members, specifically the executive-coalition, exercised both technical and transformational capacities simultaneously. Organizational actors developed technical capabilities through contracting an external source to provide

knowledge on how to manage the re-orientation. As well, they cultivated symbolic activities to build motivation and vision within the association. As a result, the CHA stopped oscillating between the *embryonic Ba* and *embryonic Ab* variations, gradually drifted towards an *embryonic Ba* orientation, and finally emerged as the *a on B* archetype, or Amateur Sport Enterprise design. Initially, the need for revenues was recognized and certain aspects of the commerce approach to hockey were practised within the organization. Later, the need to serve members and deliver programs was important and the grassroots ideals embraced within this orientation were also constituted through various community-directed activities.

A second factor influencing organizational capabilities was staff turnover. An analysis of the staff changes during the period of this study showed a high degree of staff turnover during the later part of the merger. Initially, personnel from both organizations were retained for post-merger operations. Hence, instead of downsizing, the CHA actually accommodated a staff that was significantly larger than the number of Managers that worked within either parent organization. As the CHA progressed along the merger track, the divestment and acquisition of staff played a critical role in the nature of the change since these factors strongly influence the organizational skill base. During the period of this study, five managers left the association, fifteen new managers were hired, and many lower level staff moved up the system to higher coordinator, manager or vice-president positions. When staff left the organization, they eliminated particular competencies from the skills bank; when new staff members entered, they introduced new knowledge into the association; and finally, when current staff advanced within the

system their repertoire of competencies reinforced the values and beliefs of the senior management.

The final factor that influences organizational capability specifically within a Canadian amateur sport organization was the indeterminate nature of the volunteer base. In the case of the Canadian hockey system, the progression of a volunteer from a local hockey association up to the high echelons of the CHA Board can take as many as 20 years. A volunteer essentially cultivates a career within the hockey network and as a result, the volunteer base represents a very stable entity with low turnover. Despite the numerous development initiatives offered by the CHA, a volunteer enhancement program does not exist. Therefore, changes to its volunteer skill base may only occur through the trial and error experience gained by volunteers operating within the political trenches. For the CHA, and voluntary organizations as a whole, the volunteer base may be a benefit or a detriment, depending on the types of organizational capabilities needed at any one time. In this study it was evident that the volunteer pool within the CHA had technical skills and was primarily embedded within the community-based interpretive scheme. Hence, it favoured an archetype design that held either the community-commerce tension in a state of *schizoid incoherence* or favoured a community-dominant variation, such as *embryonic Ab*.

During stages two and three of the CHA merger track, different groups were able to couple organizational capabilities with power dynamics to generate a particular direction for change. However, when the organization moved from *schizoid incoherence* to either of the embryonic variations, it became apparent to organizational members that leadership and knowledge were both critical elements to direct the association towards a



coherent design and, therefore, complete the change process. An oscillation is a situation where the organization shifts back and forth between two existing positions. In this merger, an oscillation was evident between *embryonic Ba* and *embryonic Ab* positions. These two stages represent a time where multiple shifts occurred between the interpretive schemes that underlay each of these configurations. Ultimately, organizational capabilities provided the impetus to end delay that held the CHA in an *embryonic Ba* position at the end of stage three and move the CHA towards re-orientation.

An alliance of the elite within the operational and governance domains of the CHA emerged due to the lack of technical or behavioural leadership that existed within each area independently. In this way, the elite was able to secure both transactional and transformational capabilities. Many respondents believed the elite alliance emerged because of the inability of the Board of Directors to manage the change. For example, the following statements identify this deficiency:

The Board's job is to focus on the organization – what it is supposed to be doing – put the framework and administration in place to achieve these goals. The Board of the CHA is incapable of doing that and that's where the whole thing is falling apart (CHA Volunteer).

I would interpret the [CHA] Board, most of them, to be well-meaning but more interested in having a blazer with a crest – or a ticket to Nagano – or organize the World Junior. I mean, what do you have staff for? What do you have sub-committees for (CHA Volunteer)?

We have volunteers at the top end of our Board that I think are very good people and have put in a lot of time. But time doesn't necessarily qualify you to make decisions on a multi-million dollar business. [Therefore] Many times, decisions are not based on what's right as an organization (CHA Manager).

The most powerful comment regarding the incapacities of volunteer members of the CHA is stated below:

The problem is that becoming a Board member of the CAHA is a reward for years of service of hanging around the rink. It doesn't mean that the person is able to perform at that level ... They don't have the basic information and knowledge or experience to make intelligent, well-formed, and focused decisions (CHA Volunteer).

A blend of transactional and transformation leadership and community and commerce knowledge enabled the executive coalition to negotiate the community-commerce tension, which originally arose within the organization when it was in a *schizoid incoherence* position. The outcome of this mediation was the *Amateur Sport Enterprise* archetype. Here, the commerce-orientation represented the underlying interpretive scheme within the CHA, while the community-orientation drove the structures that were layered upon the business-like value base. Two particular comments from the data reflect the indisputable strength of the business model within the final stage of the CHA merger:

The problem with so many amateur sport organizations like the CAHA – people criticize me for saying this – is they do not act and react in a businesslike manner. I don't mean that as a profit mode. I mean it in a concise, focused decision-making manner. Instead, it's operation by extended committee (CHA Volunteer).

If this organization does not streamline itself, focus itself, and bring itself into the 21st century, it is going to lose ground and it is going to become redundant (CHA Volunteer).

Fox-Wolfgramm et al., (1998) argue that some archetypes have interpretive flexibility and allow for a greater range of norms and behaviours than is typically evident within an archetype, or a tightly coupled value-structure design. They suggest radical change might produce a design where the new interpretive scheme holds remnants of the previous scheme, rather than transforms into a completely new value orientation. The

CAHA and HC formed a new Amateur Sport Enterprise with a marketing-development orientation. The new archetype included an interpretive-structural dualism between community and commerce interpretive schemes that was only possible because of the high differentiation between the community and business coalitions, transactional and transformational capacities, and operational and governance structures within the association. In this way, the CHA merger reflected a radical change process that involved interpretive flexibility.

### **Revisiting Internal Differentiation – the Schism Dynamic**

The previous section provided insight regarding the CHA merger and the influence of four intra-organizational dynamics -- interests, value commitments, power, and organizational capability. The discussion also detailed the impact of internal differentiation on change. It was evident that the configuration of groups within the CHA shifted throughout the merger as coalitions were formed and disbanded. In order to better understand the influence of schisms on change, the following discussion explores three factors - strategies of engagement, types of legitimacy, and forms of leadership - and how they determine the nature of coalitions within the CHA.

*Strategies of Engagement*

In their discussion of organizational relations within an institutional domain, Hardy and Phillips (1998) identified four strategies of engagement – collaboration, compliance, contention and contestation - used by stakeholders to change or maintain the parameters of the interorganizational domain in which they operate. They suggested that creative and synergistic outcomes may be produced through both collaborative and conflictual relationships. The strategies they offer can be applied to the nature of engagement among sub-units within an organization, such as the institutional setting of the CHA. Power is exercised through a combination of different mechanisms, including formal authority, control over resources, and discursive legitimacy. Hardy and Phillips (1998) argued that the quality of power is not reflected in the structural characteristics of an institutional setting, but in the dynamic social order that is negotiated among institutional actors, or in this case groups within the CHA. Therefore, internal differentiation is a reflection of directions and boundaries that are continuously debated. In addition, power enables (or disables) a group to participate in the social construction of the organization.

During the merger, power played a critical role in determining the dominant ideas and values that came to exist within the CHA. Although a balanced power condition existed in stage one, by stage two control had become concentrated within the business operations management unit. Therefore, the interpretive scheme of this group became the foundation of the *embryonic Ba* variation. However, despite the high dependence of other coalitions upon the expertise and resources of the business coalition, this group did

not hold formal authority and its legitimacy was challenged. The *embryonic Ab* variation emerged in stage three. This was a response of the volunteer-based community coalition which garnered a high level of formal authority, through the Board of Directors, and a significant degree of legitimacy through the residual ideals of the vast grassroots membership. Therefore, conflictual engagement, one strategy explained by Hardy and Phillips (1998), existed among groups and power was dispersed.

The struggle between these two dominant coalitions, each of which harboured different sources of power, created greater internal diversity during stages two and three of the merger. At times, the designation of power was unclear, and vague connections to critical resources existed. The uncertainty meant that at particular moments, control over resources was an important mechanism, while at other times, formal authority was exercised. In addition, the first three stages reflected a condition of flux where the CHA design resembled various schizoid and embryonic archetype forms, such as *embryonic A*, *embryonic B*, *schizoid incoherence*, *embryonic Ba*, and *embryonic Ab*. During these incoherent stages, the indicators of legitimacy were formative and sources of power were shifting among sub-units within the organization. For example, during certain periods, the successful marketing and sponsorship of the business-coalition took greater prominence, while at other times, the symbolic connection of the community-coalition to the ideals of the grassroots mission was perceived as more legitimate. However, by stage four, cooperative engagement by the elite within both the community and commerce-coalitions of the CHA created a new executive-coalition within the association. Here, the upper-level volunteers and the senior managers joined forces to create a new sub-unit.



As a result, power and legitimacy were aligned into one dominant centre, an executive-coalition, and the *a on B design*, or Amateur Sport Enterprise was established.

### *Legitimacy and Leadership*

Aldrich and Fiol (1994) examined the formative years of an industry and how legitimacy is a key factor in entrepreneur and industry creation. They identified two types of legitimacy. Cognitive legitimacy relates to the dissipation of knowledge about a new venture and how this information becomes so familiar that it is taken-for-granted. Socio-political legitimacy relates to a process by which key stakeholders, the general public, key opinion leaders, and government officials accept a venture as appropriate and right, given existing norms and laws. Hence, the cognitive type examines the level of public knowledge whereas the socio-political type is based upon the level of public acceptance.

The action initiated by "schisms" within an organization and their role in directing change can be closely linked to the legitimacy garnered by specific sub-units during the formative stages of the CHA. As a schism within an organization gains these kinds of legitimacy, the success of a new practice or venture within the organization will be enhanced. For example, the need to formalize the marketing operation afforded one group within the CHA, the business "specialists", the opportunity to generate greater legitimacy via the dissipation of guidelines and regulations regarding sponsorship programs. In an effort to educate all members and teach them the fundamental

components of the sponsorship initiatives, the "marketeers" gained cognitive legitimacy by virtue of their position as "teachers", with other groups as "students". In addition, "schisms", or coalitions, may utilize third party actors to promote knowledge and enhance cognitive legitimacy (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994). For example, the "marketeers" within the CHA garnered this type of influence by capitalizing upon external actors speaking on their behalf. The federal government, via Sport Canada, and various corporate sponsors campaigned in the "pro sponsorship" camp that increased educational awareness. Essentially, everywhere a CHA member turned, the volunteer or manager was inundated with information regarding amateur sport and corporate sponsorship, and more importantly, its acceptance as a critical operation within the amateur sport community.

Large-scale organizational change includes three general transformation stages: restructuring, revitalization, and renewal (Kimberly and Quinn, 1984). Traditional views of leadership and change emphasized the impact of top management during the early stages of the process, or during restructuring. Leadership is closely related to legitimacy and both are critical aspects of change management. Chakravarthy and Garguilo (1998) suggest that there are two sources of corporate leadership legitimacy that can impact the nature of organizational change. First, commercial legitimacy relates to the "support of top management from shareholders, bondholders, customers and suppliers", and second, social legitimacy relates to "the degree of commitment that top management can generate from the firm's employees and host communities for the firm's mission and strategies" (Chakravarthy and Garguilo, 1998: 441). These two measures reflect transactional and

affective associations that can be harnessed by leaders within an organization as sources of legitimacy

In this study it is evident that leadership and legitimacy played an important role in reconstituting particular schisms at different stages of the CHA merger. For example, the community-coalition resisted the business-coalition because the legitimacy of the business-coalition was insufficient. Although the business-coalition held a leadership role due to its provision of critical resources at the time of the budget deficit, it failed to couple this with legitimacy, a critical aspect of leadership and power in any revitalization (Nadler and Tushman, 1990). However, the business-coalition did generate a great deal of commercial legitimacy later in the merger through support from key CHA clients, customers and suppliers like the federal government, the corporate sector, and international sport federations such as the International Ice Hockey Federation and the International Olympic Committee. Each of these stakeholders reinforced the need for a market-based approach within the CHA. The business-coalition provided the transactional associations necessary to satisfy these actors. Thus, senior management, primarily drawn from Hockey Canada, and upper-level volunteers, many of whom assumed strong leadership roles within the CHA Board after the merger, emphasized fiscal-business operations, and their appeal to primarily corporate stakeholders garnered them commercial legitimacy.

Additionally, the business-coalition tried to enhance its power by developing cognitive legitimacy (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994). The coalition educated other CHA members about its corporate management style through a standing committee for marketing that was created within the governance system. It also generated various

reports that outlined the CHA sponsorship package. By teaching members the sponsorship format, the "marketeers" developed cognitive knowledge through the production of specific business knowledge. However, the "marketeers" failed to acquire social legitimacy. The community coalition harnessed power through its affective association to the service network and grassroots mission. The shift from *embryonic Ba* to *embryonic Ab* reflected the strength of this commitment and support. Management drawn from the former CAHA emphasized membership and development based operations and garnered social-political support due to an affinity with many provincial and community level members to these practices.

These forms of legitimacy were very fluid and arose when "schisms" became defined along these types of boundaries. The business coalition held cognitive legitimacy and resource control while the community coalition held social legitimacy and formal authority. The configuration among leadership groups, and their sources of legitimacy, changed throughout the merger. The commerce coalition dominated in the early stages of the merger, while the community coalition experienced punctuated moments of influence, particularly during the oscillations between stages two and three.

This finding contradicts the Chakravarthy and Garguilo (1998) suggestion that commercial legitimacy is not an enduring form of influence or effective during the more crucial stages of late restructuring and revitalization. The fact that social legitimacy was weak during the later stages of the merger raises an awareness of mediating factors. This enabled certain groups to maintain commercial legitimacy for extended periods during the merger. In particular, the commerce coalition included groups at the upper levels of the hierarchy and, therefore, harnessed formal authority. This group simply made

arbitrary decisions that reinforced market-based, business practice within the association. In addition, there were conditions of resource dependence that favoured the commercial coalition. During the post-merger phase, the CHA needed to secure revenues and the "marketeers" presented the most critical resource to fulfill that need. Hence, other groups depended upon them for key financial resources. Finally, it is important to recognize the political nature of the CHA and the desire of members to advance within the hierarchy. Self-interest plays a role in maintaining commercial legitimacy at the expense of social legitimacy as particular groups within the organization seek to gain power. Certain actors and groups acquiesced with commercial pressures as a strategy for advancement and, as such, reinforced the absence of member-inclusive decision-making measures.

The multiplicity of schemes that existed within the new CHA was highly competitive and simultaneously constituted and re-constituted emerging values within the CHA. Initially, antagonisms among the groups were so great that the organization reflected schizoid incoherence and no dominant logic existed. Cooper et al. (1996) found that, in cases of contradiction, actors "draw upon different schemes to explain and justify contradictory practices in different parts of a firm's activities" (p. 38). In this case, organizational members tried to gain internal stability and certainty by both consciously and unconsciously consolidating the competitive interpretive schemes into some coherent configuration. This process involved the identification of interpretive variation within the organization as well as a reconciliation of these contradictions into a position of ideological consensus. The result of this transformation was a gradual "diminishing of difference" among groups where a community-based governance system was structured upon a commercial, business-based interpretive scheme. This *a on B* design resembled



what Cooper et al. (1996) termed "sedimentation" and what Tushman and O'Reilly (1996) referred to as an "ambidextrous" organization. This illustrates that over time, the CHA moved towards convergence where internal differentiation became homogenous and as a result, a dominant logic was finally established.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

This study of the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA) merger examines the explanatory strength of Greenwood and Hinings's (1996) model of institutional change within the amateur sport sector. Specifically, the research explores whether the model, in its current state or suitably adapted, allows for a better understanding of the CHA merger process, as well as future mergers within the Canadian amateur sport system. Essentially, this project tests the model using the CHA merger case and poses the following query: although a model exists to explain institutional change within an organization, how good is the model at explaining this particular case? This question can be answered through a summary of the key research findings from the study. The results will be summarized in this chapter based upon the five key research questions listed in chapter one.

The first research query relates to the context and history surrounding the CHA merger. Four insights are drawn regarding the development of the Canadian hockey institutional system. First, the institutional hockey context gravitated towards a tightly-coupled condition. Second, this context experienced several contradictions over the institutional values and practices among the four major actors, which were the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA), the National Hockey League (NHL), the hockey booster/entrepreneur coalition, and Hockey Canada (HC), who operated within the system at different periods of time. Third, over time, certain actors accessed various sources of power within the system and, in so doing, controlled the meanings and values

that shaped the system. Fourth, these changes culminated in the formation of the CHA, which is currently the dominant actor within the Canadian hockey institutional forum. Essentially, the system changed from a small but diverse collection of actors into a large but ideologically focused collection of actors with an elite coalition.

The second research question examines the nature of the CHA merger change track. The configurational approach, which includes the notions of archetypes and organizational track, provides an effective tool to map the CHA merger. The results reveal novel embryonic forms, such as the *embryonic Ab* and *embryonic Ba*, and suggest that embryonic dualism be considered as a potential position along an organizational track. Most importantly, the data identify a new archetype, termed the Amateur Sport Enterprise (ASE), within the Canadian amateur sport institutional domain. This archetype should be explored in future research that compares the ASE to the three national sport organization (NSO) designs explained by Kikulis et al. (1992, 1995a, 1995b), which include the kitchen table, the boardroom, and the executive office. The discussion of the Amateur Sport Enterprise presented in this study, which was based upon the same archetype components as Kikulis and her colleague's research, provides a convenient starting point for comparative work on existing and emerging NSO organizational designs. Finally, the CHA merger study elaborates upon the notion of sedimentation within organizational designs (Cooper et al., 1996). The interpretive and structural dualism that exists within the CHA, or Amateur Sport Enterprise archetype, supported the argument that sedimentation is a coherent design. In other words, archetype reorientation can be successful when sedimentation occurs.

The third research question analyzes how pace and sequence influenced the dynamics of the CHA merger track. The results reveal that trigger events play a critical role in stimulating movement along an organizational track and indirectly influenced the pace and sequence of the change process. These trigger events initiated both prescribed-emergent and emergent-prescribed detachments throughout the CHA merger. When an emergent-prescribed detachment occurred, such as the actions that occurred during stage two in response to the high level of uncertainty within the CHA, the changes in the interpretive scheme persevered until the final reorientation. In other words, an emergent-prescribed detachment drove value-based changes, and although delays and oscillations occurred, these values and beliefs endured until reorientation. Finally, the CHA merger exhibited short periods of change at the beginning and end of the merger time frame and a longer period in the middle. However, the pace of the change across all of these stages was neither revolutionary nor evolutionary. In fact, the tempo remained relatively quick and presents evidence for a third pace of change, which in the end still achieved a successful reorientation.

The fourth research question examines the impact of the four key intra-organizational dynamics - interests, value commitments, power, and organizational capacity - upon the CHA merger. In this case, interests and value commitments enabled change, particularly when CHA members became dissatisfied with the merger plan shortly after the amalgamation was formalized. It is important to note that the interpretive scheme that first emerged in the *embryonic Ba* endured within the sedimented archetype position, termed *archetype a on B*. This suggests that interests and value commitments, two enabling dynamics identified by Greenwood and Hinings (1996)

play a greater role in directing change than the organizational change literature currently suggests. The results also revealed that power played an important role in directing the reorientation when the CHA was oscillating between two embryonic positions along the track. On the other hand, organizational capacity played an important role in directing the reorientation when the CHA was held in a delay position along the merger track.

The final key research question explores how the four intra-organizational dynamics inter-related to each other during the change process. The data showed that interests and value commitments have a compound effect in precipitating change. That is, these factors combined to create a significant level of unrest within the organization and this triggered a major change within the CHA between stage one and two. In addition, although power enabled transformation, in order for reorientation to actually occur the organizational capacity within the CHA had to be adequate. Thus, organizational capacity was pivotal for the CHA to re-achieve archetype coherence in the form of the Amateur Sport Enterprise design.

Having summarized the main findings related to each key research question, it is now important to comment on whether the Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) model effectively explains the CHA merger case. Overall, the model provides a valuable framework to analyze the CHA merger. However, by testing the model within the context of the CHA merger case, it is possible to devise one main adaptation - the inclusion of schisms as an intra-organizational dynamic. The Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) model is based upon empirical research on for-profit, and to some extent, public sector organizations. Alternatively, the CHA merger case is based upon organizational change within the voluntary non-profit amateur sport sector. Thus, this case offers a



unique context and provides three key sources of support for schisms as a new internal factor for institutional change.

First, the case examined schisms as they existed within a volunteer sport federation. As a voluntary organization, the CHA operate according to a federated sport governance system. This type of national-provincial structure is not found in for-profit organizations and presented an added dimension of tensions between the centre and periphery of the association. In this case, the tensions created an ongoing need for reconciliation where regional considerations were constantly recognized within the national structure. Hence, schisms are a factor that needs to be considered continuously throughout the change process. Future research will utilize the remaining data from this study, which was collected from volunteers and staff at the regional levels of the CHA, in order to examine the nature and impact of the schisms specifically derived from the federated structure of voluntary sport organizations.

Second, organizational capacity became a critical factor in this case because of the nature of schisms within a voluntary sport organization. Amateur sport faces the limitation of working with volunteers and, therefore, organizational capacity and schisms are closely connected to the volunteer dynamic. Volunteer turnover within the CHA was more volatile than the level of employee turnover typically seen in profit-driven organizations. Hence, volunteers had a strong impact on the skills and expertise within the association. Volunteers entered and exited the organization continuously and as a result, organizational capacity was a fluid component that depended upon the configuration of schisms at particular moments during the merger. This variation is

adapted into the model by incorporating schisms as a factor that drives precipitating and enabling factors separately (refer to Figure 5:2 on p. 150).

Third, the CHA merger case study reveals not only schism volatility, but also longevity. Volunteer loyalties within an amateur sport organization are very strong and long-lasting. In a case such as the CHA, where a volunteer's career within a sport association spans many years, schisms represent an enduring condition. Schisms deal with basic differences among sub-groups over organizational purpose. Typically, in for-profit organizations, these divisions are eliminated since paid staff can be frozen out or dismissed when disagreements arise. For example, a merger in business is often driven by a new mission that sets the purpose of the new entity. Those who do not adapt to the mission often leave and seek employment elsewhere. However, this was not the case in the CHA merger, where the CAHA and HC volunteers remained with the association despite disagreements with the new mission. These volunteers believed the CHA was their organization; people had invested their values and themselves into the association. These fractures were not easy to resolve within the CHA and, in fact, were an enduring intra-organizational dynamic. In this way, the Greenwood and Hinings' (1996) model needs to include schisms as an intra-organizational dynamic in order to reflect the volatility and longevity of this fundamental component.

Overall, the CHA merger case provides a springboard for further research in organizational change within Canadian NSOs. It presents evidence of a contemporary archetype design, the Amateur Sport Enterprise, which in time may develop greater prominence within the Canadian amateur sport domain. In addition, the study identifies schisms as a new intra-organizational dynamic. Future research will facilitate the

theoretical elaboration of these concepts and enhance our understanding of the nature of change within amateur sport governing bodies.

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## APPENDIX A

## Glossary of Terms

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aborted Excursion             | when an organization enters an early stage of change but then returns to its original design configuration.                                                                          |
| Archetype                     | a coherent organizational design with tightly coupled values and structures; clusters of structures and systems given coherence by an underpinning set of ideas, values and beliefs. |
| Archetype Decoupling          | when an organization moves out of a coherent design state.                                                                                                                           |
| Delay                         | a stage along an organizational track where an organization experiences extended periods of stasis.                                                                                  |
| Deterministic View            | a theoretical perspective that argues structure-based conditions are a key force influencing organizational change; closely related to institutional theory.                         |
| Embryonic Archetype           | a condition where the structures and processes of an organization nearly reflect the ideas and values of a consistent interpretive scheme.                                           |
| Inertia Track                 | when an organization gravitates towards a particular design configuration and remains there for lengthy periods of time.                                                             |
| Interpretive Scheme           | represents the ideological foundation of an organizational design; the values and ideas that underlay an archetype.                                                                  |
| Intra-organizational Dynamics | internal organizational factors influencing change; include interests, value commitments, power and organizational capability.                                                       |
| Oscillation                   | a stage along an organizational track where an organization experiences temporary reversals between stages.                                                                          |
| Organizational Track          | outlines the path taken by an organization as it moves from one coherent design, through non-coherent stages, to a new coherent design.                                              |

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reorientation        | a transformation where an organization leaves one design configuration and assumes a new coherent design configuration.                                                            |
| Schisms              | divisions or differentiations within an organization that influence the nature of change.                                                                                          |
| Sedimentation        | an organizational reorientation where the layering of structures upon values is considered a coherent design configuration.                                                        |
| Schizoid Incoherence | when tension between contradictory sets of ideas and values within an organization generates design incoherence.                                                                   |
| Transition           | the changes that occur between the onset of imbalance within an organization and the time when equilibrium is re-established.                                                      |
| Trigger Event        | an event that stimulates organizational change by destabilizing an organization design state, such as archetype coherence, embryonic archetype coherence, or schizoid incoherence. |
| Voluntaristic View   | a theoretical perspective that argues action-based conditions are a key force influencing organizational change; closely related to strategic choice theory.                       |



**APPENDIX B****Interview Guide****1. PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Name  
Affiliation to CHA  
Former organization - HC or CAHA  
Length of involvement  
Professional/technical training

**2. BACKGROUND OF MERGER**

Why was there a merger? Anticipatory or reactive?  
What were the driving forces of the merger?  
How did you perceive the change?  
Describe the nature of CAHA (or HC) prior to the merger  
    What was its goal?  
    What was its structure?  
    Use some words to describe its character - values  
What does your previous organization (HC or CAHA) offer to the new CHA?

**3. INDIVIDUAL ROLE**

What was your role in the CAHA (or HC)?  
What is your role in the CHA?  
Do you feel your role has changed? How?

**4. CONSENSUS**

Within the Organization:  
    Is there a certain way in which you have to fulfill your role in the CHA?  
    Are there explicit policies - general guidelines or unwritten codes that you follow?  
    Do you have autonomy in your role? Is this understood  
Is there a general approach to management in the CHA?  
    Would you describe this approach(es)?  
With other organizations  
    If you were to place the CHA within a group

## 5. CAPACITY

Describe any challenges the merger has presented to you.

How have you handled these challenges?

Have you changed the way you operate in the organization?

How (management techniques, volunteer interaction)?

Describe any "merger" challenges that face the CHA as a whole

How will the CHA handle these?

What people will play an important role in overcoming the merger challenges?

## 6. MANAGING THE MERGER

To what degree has HC or CAHA retained its own practices/value?

In what areas are these values retained?

Do the people from each organization accommodate each other? To what extent

How have the character - values of the CAHA and HC come together?

How would you characterize the relations among members from each of the organizations as they work together in the new CHA?

Who is setting the direction of the new CHA?

What are the main goals?

How will the CHA achieve these goals?

Are these appropriate

What are the critical areas the CHA should address?

How should the CHA approach these issues of the future?